Drops of Nectar

Khenpo Kunpal's Commentary

on

Shantideva's Entering the Conduct of the Bodhisattvas

Volume One

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Śāntideva's Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra

according to the tradition of Paltrül Rinpoche

Commentary by Khenpo Kunpal Chapter One

With Oral Explanations by Dzogchen Khenpo Chöga

Volume One

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The translator is happy to receive corrections and revisions from other translators, editors and readers. Up-to-date editions of these texts will be placed every six months or so at:

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Dedicated to the unceasing activities of
Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche

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Andreas Kretschmar

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Translator's Introduction

Suggestions for the Reader

The following translator's introduction may be of interest to the academic reader who wishes to understand the details of the translation and lineage history of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra thoroughly. The introduction by Khenpo Chöga is presented from the viewpoint of a highly trained scholar of the Nyingma tradition and establishes the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra within the context of the study and practice of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Tsoknyi Rinpoche approaches the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra from the perspective of a well-known and accomplished meditation master, explaining how to use the text for personal meditation practice.

Khenpo Kunpal's written commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra and Khenpo Chöga's explanation of the commentary will be most appreciated by serious scholars and practitioners pursuing extensive and in-depth study of this text.

About this Book

The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is without doubt one of the most significant works in Mahāyāna Buddhist literature. Written entirely in verse, the text is a remarkable piece of didactic Sanskrit poetry,[1] extolling the bodhisattva ideal and guiding a Buddhist practitioner along the complete Mahāyāna path, culminating in the attainment of enlightenment. The text is generally thought to have been written in the 8th century at the Buddhist university of Nālandā[2] by the Indian master and monk Śāntideva. The text soon acquired great popularity, and a rich tradition of commentarial writing on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra developed. This, however, ended with the decline of Buddhism in India.

As part of establishing Indian Buddhism in Tibet, an enormous project of translating Buddhist texts was carried out by Tibetan translators assisted by Indian paṇḍitas, yogin-scholars. Of the many texts that were translated into Tibetan, the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra rapidly gained a prominent position. Many Tibetan explanation lineages[3] of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra came into existence then and have been preserved in Buddhist monasteries and shedras[4] up to the present day. All the main schools of

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[1] For comments on the poetic quality of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, see *The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, a new translation*, pages xxxviii-xxxix.

[2] The Buddhist monastery and university of Nālandā was established by King Śaurāditya, also known as Kumāragupta I (ca. 415-455) and was destroyed by Muslim invaders in 1197. Nālandā University was the most famous institution of Buddhist education in medieval India.

[3] bshad brgyud

[4] A shedra [bshad grva], literally 'the section for teaching', is the section of a monastery devoted to the study of the five major and minor sciences, primarily Buddhist philosophy as taught in

Tibetan Buddhism—Nyingma, Kagyü, Sakya, the Old Kadampa, and the New Kadampa School, also known as the Gelukpa School—maintained their own explanation lineages of this revered text.

This work focuses on the explanation lineage of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra according to the Nyingma School as taught by the East Tibetan master Paltrül Rinpoche Orgyen Jigme Chökyi Wangpo[5] (1808-1887). Paltrül Rinpoche, one of the greatest Nyingma scholars and practitioners of the 19th century, is reputed to have taught the entire text more than one hundred times during his life. Although he was a prolific writer, he left us no written commentaries on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. However, the Nyingma interpretation he gave orally was preserved in writing by a few of his main students,[6] especially Khenpo Kunpal[7] (1862-1943), who studied for many years with Paltrül Rinpoche and wrote a comprehensive commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra.

Khenpo Kunpal's commentary is entitled, "A Word-by-Word Commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, called *Drops of Nectar*, according to the Personal Statement of the Mañjughoṣa-like Teacher."[8] This commentary, specifically designed for

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the tripiṭaka [sde snod gsum] and the Tangyur. In a major monastery of East Tibet, monks had the opportunity to specialize in ritual practice, meditation practice, administration or scholarly pursuits. Not every monastery in East Tibet had a shedra, but those shedras that were developed followed a very strict curriculum, with a series of texts that were to be studied and mastered in a particular order and within a certain time-frame.

The five major sciences [rig gnas che ba lnga] include the science of arts [bzo rig gnas], medical science [gso ba'i rig gnas], the science of linguistics [sgra'i rig gnas], the science of logic [gtan tshigs kyi rig gnas] and the inner science of Buddhist philosophy [nang don rig pa]. To be learned in the inner science means that one is learned in both sūtra and tantra. The first four of these sciences are also called the 'four common sciences' [thun mong gi rig gnas bzhi]. The five minor sciences [rig gnas chung ba lnga] consist of poetics [snyan ngag], synonymics [mngon brjod], prosody [sdeb sbyor], drama [zlos gar] and astrology [skar rtsis]. More details on the history of different East Tibetan shedras can be found later in the text.

5 Paltrül Orgyen Jigme Chökyi Wangpo [dpal sprul o rgyan 'jigs med chos kyi dbang po], known as Paltrül Rinpoche. For biographical notes see *Masters of Meditation* (pages 201-210), *dpal sprul rnam thar*. Further information was obtained from *Enlightened Vagabond*.

6 Masters such as Mipham Rinpoche [mi pham rin po che], Thubten Chökyi Drakpa [thub bstan chos kyi grags pa], Khenpo Kunpal [mkhan po kun dpal], Zhechen Gyaltsab Pema Namgyal [zhe chen rgyal tshab padma rnam rgyal], Mewa Sönam Chödrup and others.

7 Khenpo Kunpal had several names, including Gegong Khenpo Kunpal [dge gong mkhan po kun dpal], Kunzang Palden [kun bzang dpal ldan] and Thubten Kunzang Chödrak [thub bstan kun bzang chos grags]. Some sources give his birth date as 1862, while others say he lived from 1870-1940. Since Paltrül Rinpoche passed away in 1887, the birth date of 1862 seems more likely. Khenpo Kunpal was also a student of Ön Urgyen Tendzin Norbu and studied for many years at Śrī Siṃha Shedra of Dzogchen Monastery. For biographical notes see *Masters of Meditation*, pages 258-259 and page 375, footnote 286. According to *kaḥ thog lo rgyus*, page 145, Khenpo Kunpal lived to the age of 82.

8 byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i tshig 'grel 'jam dbyangs bla ma'i zhal lung bdud rtsi'i thig pa, here referred to as *kun dpal 'grel pa*.

practitioners of Buddhist meditation, has gained wide acceptance among followers of the Nyingma School and is highly respected by the Sakya and Kagyü Schools as well. Even now, Khenpo Kunpal's commentary is studied and practiced in Buddhist monasteries, universities, and dharma centers throughout the world.

In this volume, we present the first chapter of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra together with Khenpo Kunpal's commentary, both in transliteration and translation. Khenpo Kunpal's teachings are based on Paltrül Rinpoche's oral lineage. At present, Paltrül Rinpoche's explanation lineage of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is taught and maintained at many monasteries in East Tibet, particularly at Śrī Siṃha Shedra of Dzogchen Monastery. We have added to Khenpo Kunpal's written commentary the oral explanations given by a modern scholar from that shedra, Dzogchen Khenpo Chöga.[9] Following the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), Khenpo Chöga studied with qualified masters and began teaching in the late 1980s at Śrī Siṃha Shedra. Throughout his commentary, Khenpo Chöga, in keeping with traditional Tibetan Buddhist didacticism, often reiterates key points, a method designed to reinforce the text's crucial messages in the mind of the student. We felt it important to retain this element of repetition in order to present the total work in the manner of a classical oral commentary.

The reader will notice throughout the book repeated references to Dzogchen teachings. Dzogchen teaches a direct approach to buddha nature, the primordial enlightened essence common to all sentient beings. Dzogchen teachings were brought to Tibet by Padmasambhava, Vimalamitra, and Vairocana in the 9th century and are considered the most profound teachings of the Nyingma School.

This present commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra by Khenpo Kunpal is suitable for all readers who are interested in studying a classical presentation of Mahāyāna Buddhism. Because of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra's importance in the Buddhist world, we have translated this commentary to make it available to the non-Tibetan reader, thus introducing a small part of Tibet's rich oral and written explanation lineages on this text. We suggest that the reader moves between Khenpo Kunpal's commentary and Khenpo Chöga's explanation of the commentary. Since each section of Khenpo Kunpal's commentary is numbered, reference to Khenpo Chöga's explanation of the text section bearing the same number is easy.

To save newer students of the Tibetan language from having to contend with formidable Tibetan dictionaries, we have provided a Tibetan-English glossary that contains the entire vocabulary of both the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra and Khenpo Kunpal's commentary. Each entry in the glossary is cross-referenced by the section number where it appears in the transliterated Tibetan text so that each term may be seen in context.

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9 We have divided the root text and both commentaries into small sections and numbered each section. This offers the reader an easy way to work with both commentaries.

Gender-biased Language

The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra was written in the 8th century at the Buddhist university of Nālandā by the Indian master and monk Śāntideva. The students and teachers at Nālandā were exclusively male scholars and monks. Male lay people were allowed to study at the university. Female visitors, including nuns, were permitted entry only into certain public areas of the monastery and only during certain limited hours. The language of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, therefore, was exclusively designed to address a male audience.

When this text was brought to Tibet, Buddhist scholasticism remained the exclusive domain of male scholars and monks. The Tibetan commentaries on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, therefore, were also written by men for a male audience.

Given the cultural context of the time, the difficulty of travel, and Tibet's geographical isolation, the lineage of vows for fully-ordained nuns, for bhikṣuni,[10] was never transplanted in Tibet. Consequently, a system of institutionalized monastic scholasticism for women did not develop.[11] For this reason, Khenpo Kunpal's commentary often uses the specific phrase 'sons of the sugatas',[12] which cannot correctly be translated as 'children of the sugatas' or 'sons and daughters of the sugatas', although that meaning is implied.

However, bodhicitta—the mind of awakening—is absolutely not gender-biased. Thus, there is no difference between a male and a female bodhisattva or between the sons [sras po] and the daughters [sras mo] of the sugatas. Once bodhicitta is generated in one's mind, one becomes a child of the sugatas. As Khenpo Kunpal notes in text section 222, where he discusses bodhicitta's transformative quality, once precious bodhicitta has taken birth in one's mind, 'regardless of whether one has a male or

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[10] The basic precepts or vows [sdom pa] that apply to all Buddhists are organized in seven sets, called 'the seven categories of individual liberation' [so thar ris bdun bdun]. These are the following: (1) a fully ordained monk [dge slong; skr. bhikṣu]; (2) a fully ordained nun [dge slong ma; skr. bhikṣunī]; (3) a monk [dge tshul; skr. śrāmaṇera]; (4) a nun [dge tshul ma skr. śrāmaṇerikā]; (5) a male lay practitioner [dge bsnyen; skr. upāsaka]; (6) a female lay practitioner [dge bsnyen ma; skr. upāsikā], and (7) a probationary nun [dge slob ma; skr. śikṣāmāṇā]. The laity or 'householders' must observe only the precepts of a male or female lay practitioner. Renunciates [rab tu byung ba; skr. pravajyā] are those who have voluntarily left their homes and entered into a state of homelessness. They must observe at least one set of precepts other than those for the lay practitioners. Note that we translate the Sanskrit term bhikṣu with 'fully ordained monk' and the term śrāmaṇera with 'monk'—not with 'novice'. The bhikṣu as well as the śrāmaṇera are both monks. Their status differs only in the number of precepts they must observe.

[11] This situation is now changing, however, as nuns and female lay practitioners are being provided greater opportunities for formal studies both in nunneries and in Buddhist universities.

[12] bde gshegs kyi sras po

female body, whether one is old or young, of good or bad family,'[13] one becomes a bodhisattva.

Paltrül Rinpoche himself was instrumental in transmitting this text to large audiences of lay people, both women and men, thus greatly contributing to the wide dissemination of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra's explanation lineage.

Authorship of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra

Authorship of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is traditionally ascribed to the renowned Indian master Śāntideva,[14] who is generally believed to have lived in the first half of the 8th century, although no definitive historical verification according to modern academic standards can be found at present.[15]

Various legends about Śāntideva's life story have circulated over the centuries. It is said that Śāntideva was born as the son of King Kalyāṇavarman of Saurāṣṭra. At some point he beheld a vision of the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, renounced his kingdom, and entered the monastic university of Nālandā, where he received ordination as a monk from the abbot Jayadeva who gave him the name Śāntideva. Śāntideva was extremely secretive about his learning and realization, behaving outwardly like an ignorant and lazy fool. At one point he was on the brink of expulsion from Nālandā due to his behavior, which his peers deemed inappropriate. Forced to give a public recital of the scriptures on the assumption that he would instead leave Nālandā out of embarrassment, he shocked the scholars and monks by expounding one of his own compositions, the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. Legend has it that during his recital, the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī appeared in the sky and, as the entire audience watched, Mañjuśrī and Śāntideva together rose into the sky and disappeared. Thus, Mahāyāna

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13 lus la pho-mo // na-tshod la rgan-gzhon // rigs la bzang-ngan-med-par

14 As there is no certainty about the text's original form and content, or exactly when and where it was written, some scholars argue that different parts of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra may have been written by different authors or even a group of authors, which would account for the sometimes disjointed nature of the text. The legend that Śāntideva alone was the author serves to instill confidence in the Buddhist reader that the entire text is the voice of one single great master and thus inspires faith in the author and his work. In addition to the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, Tibetan scholars ascribe the authorship of two further treatises, the Śikṣā-samuccaya and the Sūtra-samuccaya, to Śāntideva. For an English translation of the Śikṣā-samuccaya, see *Compendium of Buddhist Doctrine*. In the fifth chapter Khenpo Kunpal clearly ascribes the Śikṣā-samuccaya [bslab btus / bslab pa kun las btus pa] and a Sūtra-samuccaya [mdo btus / mdo kun las btus pa] to Śāntideva. Khenpo Chöga comments that Śāntideva's Sūtra-samuccaya has been lost and only his Śikṣā-samuccaya is found in the Tangyur (Peking No. 5336). Khenpo Kunpal further mentions the Sūtra-samuccaya and a Śikṣā-samuccaya written by Nāgārjuna. Khenpo Chöga comments that Nāgārjuna's Śikṣā-samuccaya has been lost while Nāgārjuna's Sūtra-samuccaya is preserved in the Tangyur (Peking No. 5330). See, *kun dpal 'grel pa (si khron mi rigs edition)*, page 413.

15 See *Weiterwirken des Werkes*, page 29, by Siglinde Dietz, who notes that a more precise date than the first half of the 8th century cannot be determined.

Buddhists view Śāntideva as a siddha—an accomplished being—as well as an outstanding scholar.

The earliest known biographical data on Śāntideva is given by Vibhūticandra[16] in the 13th century. This Indian Sanskrit scholar came to Tibet in 1204 as part of the entourage of the famous Kashmīri paṇḍita Śākyaśrībhadra (1127-1225) and wrote a commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, which contains a short biography of Śāntideva.

Another important early biographical account of Śāntideva is found in a 14th century Nepalese manuscript fragment in Newari script. It was edited by Haraprasād Śāstri[17] and is very similar to Vibhūticandra's Tibetan account of Śāntideva's biography. Both texts—the Nepalese manuscript and Vibhūticandra's biography of Śāntideva—were analyzed by J.W. De Jong, who concluded that they were based on a common but no longer extant source.[18]

Variations on the basic themes of Śāntideva's life can be found in the writings of Butön Rinchen Drup[19] (1290-1364), Sazang Mati Panchen Jamyang Lodro[20] (1294-1376), Sönam Gyaltsen Pal Zangpo[21] (1312-1374), Möndrub Sherab,[22] Pawo Tsuglak Trengwa[23] (1504-1566), Tāranātha[24] (1575-1634), Sumpa Khenpo Yeshe Paljor[25] (1704-

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16 *vibhūti dgongs 'grel*, page 236. For the French translation of this short biography, see *La Légende de Śāntideva*. We give a English translation from the Tibetan in Khenpo Chöga's commentary to text section 93.

17 This Sanskrit version of Śāntideva's biography was translated into French by Amalia Pezzali in *Śāntideva mystique bouddhiste* and into German by Dagma Benner in *Zum Leben des Śāntideva*.

18 La Légende de Śāntideva, page 177.

19 Butön Rinchen Drup [bu ston rin chen grub] divided the legend of Śāntideva into seven amazing episodes [ngo mtshar can gyi gtam bdun] in his famous *History of Buddhism*, pages 161-166, written in 1322. For a French translation of only this part of Butön's text, see *Śāntideva mystique bouddhiste*, pages 4-11.

20 Sazang Mati Panchen Jamyang Lodro [sa bzang ma ti pan chen 'jam dbyangs blo gros], also known as Lodro Gyaltsen [blo gro rgyal mtshan] (1294-1376), wrote a short biography of Śāntideva in the introduction to his commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. See *sa bzang 'grel chen*, folios 15b2-18b3.

21 Sönam Gyaltsen Pal Zangpo [bsod nams rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po] (1312-1374) included a biography of Śāntideva in his commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra that closely followed Vibhūticandra's version of Śāntideva's biography. See *bsod nams rgyal mtshan 'grel pa*, folios 4a-6b.

22 Another account of Śāntideva's life can be found among the life stories of the eighty-four mahā-siddhas. These stories are said to have been orally transmitted by the Indian scholar Mijigpa Jinpa Pal [mi 'jigs pa sbyin pa dpal] to the Tibetan monk and translator Möndrub Sherab [dge slong smon 'grub shes rab]. See *grub thob rnam thar*, folios 86a5-91a5. For an English translation see *Masters of Mahamudra*, pages 223-228.

23 In 1565, one year before his death, Pawo Tsuglak Trengwa [dpa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba] (1504-1566) wrote a very extensive commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. He used Vibhūticandra's biography of Śāntideva as well as Butön's version. See *gtsug lag 'grel chen*, folios 3a-5a.

1788), Tsechok Ling Yongdzin Yeshe Gyaltsen[26] (1713-1793), Khenpo Kunpal (1862-1943), Khetsün Zangpo,[27] and others.

The Structure of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra

The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra delineates and illuminates the motivation of bodhicitta[28] and the application of the six transcendental perfections.[29] Śāntideva, in a beautiful and poetic manner, gathers together all the essential points of the entire bodhisattva path from the vast extent of the sūtras and their commentaries. Thus, his composition has become the classic textbook[30] of Mahāyāna Buddhism. The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra shows the beginner how to enter the path, develop bodhicitta, receive the bodhisattva precepts, and train in the six transcendental perfections of generosity, discipline, patience, diligence, meditation, and knowledge.[31] The canonical version has ten chapters bearing the following titles:

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24 See *Tāranātha's History of Buddhism*, pages 215-220. For a French translation, see *Śāntideva mystique bouddhiste*, pages 11-18.

25 See *dpag bsam ljon bzang*, page 103. For a French translation, see *Śāntideva mystique bouddhiste*, pages 18-20.

26 In 1787, the great Gelukpa Lama Tsechok Ling Yongdzin Yeshe Gyaltsen [tshe mchog gling yongs 'dzin ye shes rgyal mtshan] compiled two volumes with the biographies of all the lineage masters of the Lam Rim tradition, known as the graded stages tradition. See *lam rim bla brgyud*, pages 292.1-300.3. Yeshe Gyaltsen was the tutor [yongs 'dzin] of the Eighth Dalai Lama. For details on Yeshe Gyaltsen's life and work see *Among Tibetan Texts*, pages 171-176.

27 See *mkhas btsun bzang po Vol. I*, pages 496-504. This version is a copy of Śāntideva's life story as recorded in *grub thob rnam thar*.

28 Bodhicitta has two aspects: compassion [snying rje] and knowledge [shes rab]. Compassion focuses on benefiting others [snying rjes gzhan don la dmigs pa] through the mental commitment [dam bca' ba]: "I will free all beings from their sufferings." Knowledge focuses on perfect enlightenment [shes rab kyis rdzogs byang la dmigs pa] through the mental commitment: "I will establish all sentient beings on the level of perfect enlightenment." Note that according to Paltrül Rinpoche's tradition, compassion and loving-kindness [byams pa] by themselves are not bodhicitta; rather, they are the basis on which bodhicitta is developed.

29 The six transcendental perfections or pāramitās [pha rol tu phyin pa drug] are generosity [sbyin pa; dāna], discipline [tshul khrims; skr. śīla], patience [bzod pa; skr. kṣānti], diligence [brtson 'grus; skr. vīra], concentration [bsam gtan; skr. dhyāna], and knowledge [shes rab; skr. prajñā].

30 The term 'textbook' [gzhung] used in many contexts throughout this work refers to books that form the core curricula for the study of Buddhist philosophy and practice, such as 'the thirteen great textbooks of Indian origin' [gzhung chen bcu gsum] and 'the eighteen famous textbooks' [grags chen bco brgyad] and so on. These collections will be described later on.

31 Prajñā can also be translated as 'discriminative awareness', 'intellect','higher knowledge', 'wisdom' or 'wisdom-knowledge'.

1. Explaining the benefits of bodhicitta[32]
2. Confessing negativity[33]
3. Thorough adoption of bodhicitta[34]
4. Teaching on heedfulness[35]
5. Maintaining introspection[36]
6. Teaching patience[37]
7. Teaching diligence[38]
8. Teaching concentration[39]
9. Transcendental knowledge[40]
10. Dedication[41]

According to Kṛṣṇapāda[42] and Butön,[43] the first three and the tenth chapters elucidate the transcendental perfection of generosity, chapters four and five expound the transcendental perfection of discipline, and chapters six through nine deal with the four remaining transcendental perfections.

The Two Translation Periods and the Tibetan Canon

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[32] byang chub sems kyi phan yon bshad pa, 36 stanzas. Stanzas 1-4 cover the introduction and stanzas 4-36 deal with the actual topic of the first chapter.

[33] sdig pa bshags pa, 65 stanzas. When the term bshags pa appears in the phrase mthol zhing bshags pa, it means 'to acknowledge and lay aside'. One acknowledges [mthol ba] one's misdeeds and speaks out [brjod pa] without hiding [mi sbed pa]. Once one has acknowledged one's negative deeds [sdig pa], one lays them aside [bshags pa]. For a detailed analysis of the term, see *Illuminator*.

[34] byang chub kyi sems yongs su gzung ba, 33.5 stanzas.

[35] bag yod bstan pa, 48 stanzas.

[36] shes bzhin bsrung bar bya ba, 109 stanzas.

[37] bzod pa bstan pa, 134 stanzas.

[38] brtson 'grus bstan pa, 76 stanzas.

[39] bsam gtan bstan pa, 187 stanzas.

[40] shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa, 167 stanzas.

[41] bsngo ba, 57.5 stanzas.

[42] kṛṣṇa dka' gnas, page 187.3.1-2

[43] See bu ston 'grel chen, page 195.

In general, Buddhist texts were translated from Sanskrit and other languages into the Tibetan language during two great translation periods referred to as the 'Early Translation Period' and the 'Later Translation Period'.[44]

All texts translated between the 7th and 9th centuries, under the royal patronage of the three kings, Songtsen Gampo (618-641),[45] Trisong Detsen (756-797),[46] and Tri Ralpachen (815-838),[47] belong to the 'Early Translation Period'. All texts that were translated after the 10th century by Rinchen Zangpo[48] (958-1055) and others are considered to belong to the 'Later Translation Period'.

The followers of the explanation and practice lineages of the Early Translation Period are known as the Nyingmapas, or 'Old School'.[49] The followers of the explanation and practice lineages of the Later Translation Period are known as the 'New Schools'[50] and include the Sakya, Kagyü, and Old and New Kadampa Schools.

Most of the sūtras, tantras, and commentaries were translated during the Early Translation Period. At the time of Tri Ralpachen these translations were then revised,[51] and new translations were made according to the rules laid down in a transla-

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[44] phyi 'gyur gsar ma. The Later Translation Period or the 'later spreading' [phyi dar] began at the time of Rinchen Zangpo under the royal patronage of Lha Lama Yeshe Ö [lha bla ma ye shes 'od], one of the kings of the Ngari Khorsum [mnga' ris 'khor gsum] region. At that time many great paṇḍitas and masters such as Atiśa came from India and Nepal to Tibet. Tibetan translators such as Marpa Lotsawa went to India and brought many new texts and traditions to Tibet. This stream of new texts and teachings lasted until the time of the great translator Zhalu Lotsawa [zhva lu lo tsā ba chos skyong bzang po] (1444-1529). For a detailed analysis of this period, see the chapter on the 'History Surrounding the Revisions' in *The Thirty Verses*.

[45] According to the chapter on the 'Three Revisions of the Tibetan Language' in *The Thirty Verses*, "In the period from 750 A.D. to 1000 A.D., there is a variation in the dating of events among the most reliable of Tibetan sources by as much as 60 years." According to *Tibetan Empire*, page 227, the dates for srong btsan sgam po are 618-641.

[46] According to *Tibetan Empire*, page 228, khri srong lde btsan reigned during the second half of the 8th century, 756-797.

[47] According to *Tibetan Empire*, page 228, Ralpachen [ral pa can], also known as Tritsug Detsen [khri gtsug lde bstan], reigned circa 815-836.

[48] rin chen bzang po

[49] snga 'gyur rnying ma pa

[50] phyi 'gyur gsar ma

[51] Students of Tibetan texts should be aware that three great revisions took place in Tibet. With each revision the spelling and terminology was modified. Consequently, these changes had an impact on the way texts can be interpreted. The different translation stages of the Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra are closely linked with these revisions. The term 'revision', 'revised language', or 'revision of language' [skad gsar bcad pa] refers to the modifications that translators added to the great grammarian Thumi Sambhoṭa's (7th century) original system over the centuries with regard to orthography, standardization of translation terminology, and the incorporation of newly-defined translation terminology. During the reign of Mutig Tsenpo [mu tig btsan po], King Trisong Detsen's youngest son, the first official attempt to standardize the terminology of

tion guide known as the 'Second Tome on Grammatical Composition',[52] and also using the newly standardized vocabulary laid down in the glossary known as the Mahāvyutpatti.[53]

During the four-year reign of the anti-Buddhist king, Langdarma, who came to power around 838,[54] the lavish royal patronage upon which translators and monasteries had relied since the middle of the 8th century ended due to his suppression of Buddhism, and the work of translation came to a halt.[55] Translation of Buddhist texts resumed

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translations was made and is known as the 'first language revision' [skad gsar bcad dang po]. Under the reign of Tri Ralpachen, most Buddhist texts had already been translated, but since inconsistencies regarding the translation terminology existed, he had them corrected, and this became known as the 'second language revision' [skad gsar bcad gnyis pa]. The first two revisions fall under the Early Translation Period. In the 11th century, many masters such as Atiśa (982-1054) came to Tibet. Also during that time many new texts were brought from India, Nepal, and Kashmir to Tibet. This was the beginning of the Later Translation Period. While the standardization process begun during the first two revisons continued, a flood of new tantras brought many new terms to Tibet. Many translations from the Early Translation Period were again revised. This period, which lasted from the time of Rinchen Zangpo [rin chen bzang po] to Mahāpaṇḍita Rongzompa Dharmabhadra [rong zom pa dharma bhadra] (1012-1088), is known as the 'third language revision' [skad gsar bcad gsum pa], although some scholars argue that the third revision period lasted for as long as new texts came pouring in from India and Nepal. While the first translation of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra by Kawa Paltsek [ska ba dpal brtsegs] falls into the second revision period, the second translation by Rinchen Zangpo, and the third translation by Ngok Loden Sherab [rngog blo ldan shes rab] fall into the third revision period. For a detailed discussion of these three revisions, see the chapter called the 'Three Revisions of the Tibetan Language' in *The Thirty Verses*.

52 The 'Second Tome on Grammatical Composition' [sgra sbyor bam po gnyis pa] was compiled at the time of King Ralpachen by great Indian scholars, such as Paṇḍita Jinamitra, Surendrabodhi, Śīlendrabodhi, Dānaśila and by Tibetan translators, such as Kawa Paltsek, Chokro Lui Gyaltsen [cog ro klu'i rgyal mtshan], and Zhang Yeshe De [zhang ye shes sde]. This composition was compiled as a set of guidelines designed to facilitate exact translation of the sūtras and tantras from Sanskrit and other languages into the Tibetan language. See *The Thirty Verses*, 'The Need for the Revisions, The Tome of Grammatical Composition'.

53 The great glossary of terms known as Mahāvyutpatti [bye brag rtogs byed] lists Sanskrit terms followed by their standardized Tibetan equivalents. It was created at the time of Tri Ralpachen by many Indian scholars and great Tibetan translators, such as Kawa Paltsek, Chokro Lui Gyaltsen [cog ro klu'i rgyal mtshan], and Zhang Yeshe De [zhang ye shes sde]. Thus, a standardized dharma terminology was established during the Early Translation Period. See *From bKa' bstan bcos to bKa' 'gyur*, pages 89-90.

54 According to *Tibetan Empire*, page 228, Langdarma, also known as Tri'u Dumtsen [khri 'u dum btsan], reigned from 838-842.

55 During the time of King Langdarma [glang dar ma], when the great Tibetan empire fell apart and translation of Buddhist texts ceased in Tibet, Indian scholars and Tibetan translators left the country, and Buddhist texts were hidden in caves and in the households of lay people in order to preserve them. Monastic centers were systematically dismantled, but the practice of tantra continued among lay practitioners. Langdarma was assassinated in 842 by Palgyi Dorje [dpal gyi rdo rje]. See *From bKa' bstan bcos to bKa' 'gyur*, pages 93-95.

again in the early 11th century in what became the second great period of translation known as the Later Translation Period. The pivotal work of the great translator Rinchen Zangpo (958-1055) marks the beginning of this period.

During and after this renaissance, the compilation of a canon came to the fore. Great scholars, such as the Sakya masters Drakpa Gyaltsen[56] (1147-1216), Chögyal Phakpa[57] (1235-1280), and Butön Rinchen Drup[58] (1290-1364), made attempts to compile the great variety of extant Tibetan translations.

The translated sūtras, tantras, and commentaries were compiled in two great collections known as the Kangyur[59] and the Tangyur.[60] All the sūtras and tantras regarded as having been taught directly by the Buddha were collected in the Kangyur, the 'translated words of the Buddha', and all the commentaries and treatises on the sūtras and tantras written by great Indian masters were collected in the Tangyur, the 'translated commentaries on the words of the Buddha'.

Research has shown the absence of a standardized canon of texts of the Kangyur and Tangyur, and, therefore, scholars speak of multiple Kangyurs and Tangyurs. Furthermore, editions of individual texts have been transmitted through different Kangyurs and Tangyurs, as in the Peking, Lithang or Narthang editions,[61] making it very difficult to trace the recension history of these texts.

Since the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is a Buddhist treatise from India, it is therefore found, together with its Indian commentaries, in the Tangyur[62] rather than in the Kangyur. The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra and its Indian commentaries are located in the section known as 'sūtra commentaries' within the sub-section known as 'madhyamaka'.[63]

Tibetan scholars make references to the existence of more than 100 Sanskrit commentaries on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, most of which have been lost over the

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56 grags pa rgyal mthsan

57 chos rgyal 'phags pa

58 bu ston rin chen grub. For biographical notes, see *Life of Bu ston.*

59 bka' 'gyur. The Peking Kangyur consists of 45 volumes: vols. 1-11 rgyud; vols. 12-21 sher phyin; vols. 22-24 dkon brtsegs; vols. 25-26 phal chen; vols. 27-40 mdo sna tshogs; and vols. 41-45 'dul ba. Both sūtras and tantras are considered to be the direct words of the Buddha [sangs rgyas kyi bka'].

60 bstan 'gyur. The Peking Tangyur consists of volumes 46-150: vol. 46 bstod tshogs; vols. 46-87 rgyud 'grel; vols. 88-150 mdo 'grel. Appendices: vol. 151 dkar chag; vol. 152-165 extra (btsong kha pa / lcang skya); and vol. 165-168 catalogue.

61 For an overview on this complex topic, see *Introductory Remarks*, pages 1-12; *Structure of the Tibetan Kanjur*, pages 57-72; and *From bKa' bstan bcos to bKa' 'gyur*, pages 87-111.

62 For this work we have used a reprint of the Peking Kangyur and Tangyur as prepared in 1737 under the Qianlong emperor. This modern photographic reprint of the Peking edition was reprinted and catalogued between 1955 and 1961 and published as *The Tibetan Tripitaka*.

63 Madhyamaka, dbu ma, Peking, vols. 95-103.

centuries. However, since the time of Butön, who established his Tangyur compilation at Zhalu monastery in 1334,[64] ten Sanskrit commentaries have been preserved in their Tibetan translations in the Tangyur. Of the ten, the only single complete commentary still in existence in the Sanskrit language is the Bodhi-caryāvatāra-pañjikā,[65] written by the Indian scholar Prajñākaramati.[66] A fragmentary, anonymous Sanskrit commentary on the Bodhicaryāvatarā from Nepal has not yet been analyzed and published.[67] The numerous commentaries on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra written by Tibetan scholars were not included in the Tangyur but were published separately.[68]

History of the Translation of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra

According to tradition, Śāntideva wrote the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra in Sanskrit in the 8th century. As the popularity of this text in India was said to be extremely high, one would expect to find many extant Sanskrit manuscripts. However, only a few survived the decline of Buddhism in India.

A Sanskrit version of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra was first edited in 1889 by the Russian scholar P. Minaev.[69] Later, in 1904, Louis de la Vallée Poussin[70] used Minaev's critical edition plus two additional manuscripts and established what is now known as the 'current Sanskrit version' of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra.[71] So far, no

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64 See *Life of Bu ston*, page 33. Ruegg also observes on pages 20-21: "It is thus evident that by the beginning of the fourteenth century the number of Sūtra and Śāstra works available in Tibetan was very considerable and that the time was ripe for collecting them together, the more so as the flow of new texts from India had considerably decreased since the twelfth century following the Muslim invasions of India and the virtual disappearance of Buddhism from the land of its origin. This almost complete severance of relations with India was a particularly important event in the history of Tibetan Buddhism which had hitherto been a most faithful follower of the fully developed Indian Buddhism. Thus, whereas the compilation of the Sūtra texts into a canon had been for long feasible, the collection and edition of the commentaries for which Bu ston is renowned would scarcely have been conceivable had authoritative new works been continuing to flow into Tibet from India in the same quantity as before."

65 sher 'byung bka' 'grel

66 shes rab 'byung gnas blo gros. For the Sanskrit edition by Louis De La Vallée Poussin, see *Prajñā-karamati's commentary.*

67 Louis de la Vallée Poussin used this fragment for his edition of Prajñākaramati's Pañjikā and refered to this text as Bodhicaryāvatāra-ṭippānī. This text was discovered in the Durbar Library in Kathmandu, Nepal, by Professor Cecil Bendall.

68 The only exception in the Peking Tangyur is Tsongkhapa's commentary. See *blo bzang grags pa sher 'grel*, Peking No. 6133, added under extra in vol. 153.

69 See *Bodhicaryāvatāra edited by Minayev* (alternative spellings: Minayeff and Minaev).

70 See the introduction in *Prajñākaramati's commentary*: "As concerns the text of the Bodhicaryāvatāra, I have used the edition of Minaev and his critical apparatus, together with the two MSS. in Paris (Devanāgarī 78, Burnouf 98, call Dev. and Burn)."

71 *The Bodhicaryāvatāra, a new translation*, page xli: "De la Vallée Poussin had the advantage of utilizing Minaev's work and taking account of Prajñākaramati's explanation, a source of

details of the 'current Sanskrit version' of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra,[72] such as the age, the exact place of origin, etc., are known. In this regard, the Tibetan translations of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra provide much more detailed information. First, the Tibetan versions can be dated very accurately, and second, they are to date the oldest known versions.

Important information about the translation history of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra can be gathered from the colophons of each translation written by the translators themselves. Each colophon identifies the main translators as well as the Indian and/or Nepalese scholars who assisted the translators in their work. Later colophons repeat and incorporate the previous colophons, giving us information regarding the details of each stage of the translation. The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra was translated three times from Indian manuscripts into Tibetan over a period of almost 300 years.

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correction not available to Minaev." In 1960 P.L. Vaidya published his edition of the Bodhicaryāvatāra of Śāntideva with the Commentary Pañjikā of Prajñā-karamati. Also in 1960 Vidhushekhara Bhattacharya published an edition of the Bodhicaryāvatāra. In 1988 Dwaraka Das Shastri published his edition of the Bodhicaryāvatāra and Prajñākaramati's commentary.

72 The current Sanskrit version is entitled 'Bodhicaryāvatāra'. All Tibetan translations are entitled 'Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra' [byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa], often abbreviated to 'Caryāvatāra' [spyod 'jug]. Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra seems to be the original title of the text, a conclusion supported by the manuscripts found in 1900 in the Tun-huang caves in China. Note that all Tibetan translations of the text and many of its commentaries give the spelling 'bodhisatva' instead of 'bodhisattva'. The most obvious explanation is that Sanskrit grammar allows duplication of consonants. From this point of view there is no significant difference between the two forms of spelling.

According to Tony Duff, Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche explained 'satva' as the correct spelling for the Tibetan term <u>dpa' bo</u>, meaning hero or warrior, as used in <u>byang chub sems dpa'</u>. Khenpo Kunpal defines bodhisattva in text section 144 this way: "In order to attain this (bodhi), the (bodhisattva) is courageous, since his mind does not shy away from conduct that is difficult to do, such as sacrificing his head and limbs to others. Therefore, he is a <u>satva</u>, a 'hero'," [de-nyid 'thob-pa'i ched-du dbu dang yan-lag gzhan la gtong-ba sogs bya-dka'-ba'i-spyod-pas sems-mi-zhum-par dpa'-bas-na sems-dpa' ste]. He elaborates further in text section 158: "Bodhisattva means a hero whose mind does not shy away from accomplishing enlightenment through developing supreme bodhicitta as the motivation and through endeavoring in the practice of the six transcendental perfections as the application," [bsam-pa byang-chub-mchog-tu-sems-bskyed-cing sbyor-ba phyin-drug gi nyams-len la brtson-pas byang-chub sgrub-pa la sems mi-zhum-par dpa'-ba dang]. Khenpo Chöga interprets satva as sems dpa' bo, 'hero of mind'.

Har Dayal states in his *Bodhisattva Doctrine*, page 7: "<u>Sattva</u> may be a wrongly Sanskritized form of the Pāli word <u>satta</u>, which may correspond to Skr. <u>sakta</u>. Thus Pāli <u>bodhisatta</u>, from which the Sanskrit word is derived, would mean <u>bodhi-sakta</u>, 'one who is devoted or attached to bodhi'." And, on page 9: "It is almost certainly related to the Vedic word <u>satvan</u>, which means 'Krieger', 'a strong or valiant man, hero, warrior'. In this way, we can also understand the final <u>dpa'</u> in the Tibetan equivalent. <u>Satta</u> in Pāli bodhisatta should be interpreted as 'heroic being, spiritual warrior'." Kajiyama gives seven meanings of the word <u>satva</u> in his paper *Bodhisattva and Mahāsattva*. He points out that the Tibetan word <u>sems dpa'</u> for 'sattva' combines the meaning 'mind' [sems] and 'courage' [dpa'].

The first translation: In the early 9th century the famed Tibetan translator Kawa Paltsek,[73] assisted by the Indian scholar Sarvajñādeva, first translated the text from Sanskrit into Tibetan. The colophon of the first translation as rendered in the colophon of the third translation says:[74]

> The Indian scholar Sarvajñādeva and the monk Paltsek, translator and chief editor, (translated), edited and finalized (this text) based on editions from Kashmir.[75]

The earliest reference to Kawa Paltsek's translation is found in a Tibetan source, the lDan dkar ma Catalogue,[76] most likely compiled in 824,[77] and is the *terminus ante quem* for the first Tibetan translation of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. This catalogue refers to Kawa Paltsek's translation as "the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, comprising 600 stanzas and two bampo."[78] This translation was lost for centuries and rediscovered at the beginning of the 20th century. Kawa Paltsek's Sanskrit source is unknown to us.

The second translation: About 150 years later, the Indian scholar Dharmaśrībhadra and the two Tibetan translators, Rinchen Zangpo (958-1055) and Śākya Lodro (dates unknown), corrected and re-translated the text using Sanskrit editions and commentaries from the 'Central Land'.[79] Up to now, neither Rinchen Zangpo's

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73 ka ba dpal brtsegs

74 See kun dpal 'grel pa (si khron mi rigs edition), pages 133-134.

75 rgya gar gyi mkhan po sarva jñāna deva dang zhu chen gyi lo tsā ba bande dpal brtsegs kyis kha che'i dpe las zhus te gtan la phab pa las. The colophon of the Tun-huang manuscript of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, St. 629, reads: rgya gar gyi mkhan po sar va jña deva dang zhu chen gyi lo tsa ba ban 'de dpal brtsegs kyis bsgyur cing zhus te gtan la phab pa'o. Note that the colophon of St. 629 does not state that Paltsek (translated), edited and finalized (this text) based on editions from Kashmir as the colophon of the third translation stage by Ngok Loden Sherab does.

76 The lDan dkar ma Catalogue, named after the stong thang ldan dkar gyi pho brang, was compiled by Kawa Paltsek [ska ba dpal brtsegs] and Namkhai Nyingpo [nam mkha'i snying po] during the reign of King Trisong Detsen (756-797). It lists all available translations at the time. Some sources attribute the catalogue to the time of Tri Ralpachen (815-838). See *Life of Bu ston*, page 19. See also *A Study of Akṣayamati*, page 16.

77 See *Life of Bu ston*, page 19: "G. Tucci, Minor Buddhist Texts II, p. 46 n. 1, however, considers that this catalogue was composed during the reign of Khri lde srong btsan, probably in 812, while the Mahāyvutpatti was composed in 814."

78 byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa / śloka drug brgya ste / bam po gnyis, in Akira Saito, *A Study of Akṣayamati*, page 16. Bampo [bam po] refers to the ancient binding system of palm leaves bundled together by using a thread passed through holes in the manuscript's leaves.

79 'Central Land' or 'Northern India Proper', yul dbus, skr. madhyadeśa. Buddhists consider the places of Buddha's activities to be the 'Central Land' [yul dbus] and all other surrounding areas as non-central. According to *Words of My Perfect Teacher*, pages 22-23, one should distinguish between a geographically central land [sa tshigs kyi yul dbus] and a central land in terms of the dharma [chos tshigs kyi yul dbus]. Geographically speaking, the central land is said

translation nor the Sanskrit source have been found, so we must rely on the colophon of the third translation for details:

> Later, the Indian scholar Dharmaśrībhadra, the monk Rinchen Zangpo who was translator and chief editor, and Śākya Lodro corrected, re-translated, and finalized (this text) in accordance with editions and commentaries from the Central Land.[80]

The third translation: Subsequently, about 100 years later, the Indian (or Nepalese) scholar Sumatikīrti[81] and the translator Ngok Loden Sherab (1059-1109) prepared a third translation. Its colophon reads:

> Again, at a later time, the Indian scholar Sumatikīrti and the monk Loden Sherab, translator and chief editor, corrected, re-translated, and finalized (this text) in an excellent manner.[82]

Tibetan scholars regard the third translation as the definitive version. It has ten chapters and 913 stanzas. Present-day scholars are still unsure whether or not Ngok Loden Sherab's version[83] is based on 'the current Sanskrit version'. The differences between these two versions are delineated by Vesna and Allan Wallace in their translation of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra from the Sanskrit version:[84]

> As becomes apparent throughout the text, contrary to popular assumption, the recension incorporated into the Tibetan canon is significantly different from the Sanskrit version edited by Louis de la Valleé Poussin and P.L. Vaidya. This would seem to refute the contention of Crosby and Skilton that the canonical Tibetan translation by Blo ldan shes rab was based on the Sanskrit version available to us today.

When the great Tibetan scholar Butön (1290-1364) was working on his commentary to the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, he wrote in the colophon that he was unsatisfied with his copy of the third translation by Ngok Loden Sherab because he had discovered

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to be the Vajra Seat [skr. vajrāsana] of Bodhgaya, India, at the center of Jambudvīpa, the Southern Continent [lho 'dzam bu'i gling gi yul gyi dbus rgya gar rdo rje gdan], where the thousand buddhas of this Fortunate Aeon all attain enlightenment. In terms of dharma, a central land is any land where the dharma has spread. All other countries and regions are considered to be peripheral countries and regions [mtha' 'khob].

80 slad kyis rgya gar gyi mkhan po dharma śrī bhadra dang / zhu chen gyi lo tsā ba bande rin chen bzang po dang / śākya blo gros kyis yul dbus kyi dpe 'grel pa dang mthun par bcos shing bsgyur te gtan la phab pa'o /

81 *spyod 'jug rtsa ba*, page 262.2.6, reads bal po'i paṇḍita sumatikīrti. Also *sa bzang 'grel chen*, page 443.4, reads bal po'i paṇḍita sumatikīrti.

82 yang dus phyis rgya gar gyi mkhan po su ma ti kirti dang / zhu chen gyi lo tsā ba dge slong blo ldan shes rab kyis dag par bcos shing bsgyur te legs par gtan la phab pa'o //

83 *spyod 'jug rtsa ba*, Peking No. 5272.

84 See Bodhisattva Way of Life, page 8.

numerous discrepancies between the translation, the Sanskrit text, and commentaries that were available to him. Despite his attempts, Butön reports that he was not able to find a satisfactory edition of Ngok Loden Sherab's translation. He says:

> It appears that there are a number of discrepancies with the Sanskrit text and commentaries. I have made efforts to search for a reliable copy of Ngok's translation, which, however, could not be obtained.[85]

To give credence to the ten-chapter version of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra and to lessen the importance of Kawa Paltsek's translation and its Indian commentaries,[86] Butön wrote a supportive passage in his version of the legend of Śāntideva:[87]

> Those (paṇḍitas) who had attained perfect recall,[88] when presenting what they could remember, came up with 700 stanzas, 1000 stanzas, and more than 1000 stanzas. This led to doubt… He (Śāntideva) said, 'The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra complete with 1000 stanzas is the (correct) one.'

That Śāntideva supported the ten-chapter version was thenceforth copied by all later commentators of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. Butön may have invented this part of the legend as it appears neither in Vibhūticandra's Tibetan version nor in the Sanskrit fragment edited by Haraprasād Śāstri, but there is no further proof of this. Following Butön's version, Khenpo Kunpal writes in text section 80:

> The paṇḍitas from Kashmir produced a compilation of 700 stanzas in nine chapters, and the ones from the Central Land produced a compilation of 1000 stanzas in ten chapters. Their lack of agreement led to doubts.

And further, see text section 83:

> When they reported the state of affairs to him (Śāntideva), he said, "The length of the text corresponds to the compilation of the ones from the Central Land."

We know that the translator of the second translation, Rinchen Zangpo, still had access to Kawa Paltsek's translation. Furthermore, the translator of the third translation, Ngok Loden Sherab, had access to Rinchen Zangpo's translation. Each later translator stated that he had corrected and improved upon the previous translation.

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[85] See *bu ston 'grel chen*, page 601: rgya dpe dang 'grel pa dang mi mthun pa mang po snang yang / rngog 'gyur bzang ma zhig 'bad de btsal yang mi rnyed pas. This colophon of Butön's Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra commentary has been researched by Akira Saito, *Bu ston and the sPyod 'jug*. See also *A Study of Akṣayamati*, pages 26-27.

[86] See *A Study of Akṣayamati*, page 18: "It is, however, highly probable that this story, introduced by Bu-ston and Tāranātha, was created much later than Śāntideva's age, whether in India or in Tibet, for the purpose of authorizing the version of 1000 śloka-s."

[87] See bu ston chos 'byung, page 167.

[88] gzungs, skr. dhāraṇī, here has the connotation of gzungs spobs, which means 'complete recall', 'perfect confidence' and 'perfect recall' (annotation by Tony Duff).

Tibetan scholars made no effort to preserve Kawa Paltsek's and Rinchen Zangpo's translations, perhaps because they regarded the third translation as the authoritative version. All Tibetan commentaries are based on Ngok Loden Sherab's translation, which later became the only canonical version.

However, in the beginning of the 20th century, non-Tibetan scholars learned of the existence of unidentified fragments of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra discovered in the hidden library in Tun-huang. Four manuscript fragments[89] of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra were acquired separately during several expeditions to Tun-huang, an oasis in the Kansu-Sinkiang desert, by two rival explorers: the Hungarian-British archaeologist and geographer, Sir Mark Aurel Stein,[90] and the French Sinologist, Paul Pelliot.[91]

The Japanese scholar, Akira Saito,[92] identified these four Tun-huang fragments of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra as four separate copies of Kawa Paltsek's translation, which together allow reconstruction of the entire text. Saito compared the Kawa Paltsek translation with the current version of Ngok Loden Sherab's translation and discovered enormous differences between the two:

> 1) The number of chapters. While Ngok Loden Sherab's translation has ten chapters, Kawa Paltsek's has nine, the second and third chapters being combined into one.
>
> 2) The number and order of stanzas. Akira Saito counted 701.5 stanzas in Kawa Paltsek's translation[93] and 913 stanzas in Loden Sherab's.
>
> 3) The name of the author. Kawa Paltsek's colophon[94] mentions Akṣayamati[95] as the author of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra instead of Śāntideva. Saito suggests that Akṣayamati is an epithet for Śāntideva.

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89 See Akira Saito, *A Study of Akṣayamati*, page 13; *Tibetan manuscripts*, pages 196-198, text St. 628, St. 629, St. 630; *Inventaire des Manuscritps*, page 174, text Pt. 794.

90 When Stein first arrived at Tun-huang in 1907, he learned about a secret library that had been discovered in one of the many caves in the Valley of the Thousand Buddhas in 1900 by a Chinese Taoist priest called Wang Yuan-lu. This hidden library was walled up in a Buddhist cave-temple during the early 11th century (ca. 1015 or 1035) and remained untouched for 900 years until it was discovered by Wang. These fragments from Tun-huang are at present the oldest extant Tibetan language versions of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra.

91 See Devils On The Silk Road and Pioneer Of The Silk Road.

92 Saito prepared a critical edition of the Tun-huang manuscripts of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. He so far has edited chapters 1, 2, 6, 7, and 8, using the text St. 628. See *Study of Akṣayamati* and *Study of the Dūn-hūang recension*.

93 See Akira Saito, *A Study of Akṣayamati*, page 20.

94 See colophon in St. 629, *A Study of Akṣayamati* page 14: "The Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra, written by ācārya Akṣayamati, has been finished." The Tibetan manuscript reads: [byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa // slobs dpon Blo-gros-myi-zad-pas mdzad pa rdzogs s-ho]. And furthermore, the colophon of St. 629 continues, *A Study of Akṣayamati* page 18: "An Indian

4) Saito concludes that the texts are based on two different Sanskrit manuscripts. We can deduce from the different translations that at least two, if not three, different Sanskrit versions of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra were in circulation during the different translation stages.

We conclude that the Tibetan scholars considered the longer version to be the authentic one, since five out of ten translations of Sanskrit commentaries incorporated in the Tangyur are based on a ten-chapter version. For these five commentaries, four are extensive: Peking No. 5273 by Prajñākaramati, Peking No. 5275 by Kalyāṇadeva, Peking No. 5277 by Vairocanarakṣita, and Peking 5282 by Vibhūticandra. These four extensive commentaries were all written by famous Indian scholars, and their translations are frequently quoted by Tibetan scholars. Also Peking No. 5276, a brief commentary written by the famous Indian master Kṛṣṇapāda, is frequently quoted by Tibetan scholars. Peking No. 5280 and Peking No. 5281 are short metrical synopses of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra brought to Tibet and translated by Atiśa (982-1054); they were written by his teacher Suvarṇadvīpa.[96]

Saito discovered that three of these ten commentaries are based on the same Sanskrit manuscript that Kawa Paltsek used for his translation. These are Peking No. 5274, anonymous author and translator; Peking No. 5278, translated by Paṇḍita Minyam Khölpo[97] and Loden Sherab[98] (1059-1109); and Peking No. 5279, anonymous author and translator. Peking No. 5279, a commentary exclusively on the chapter about transcendental knowledge, is identical with the eighth chapter of Peking No. 5274.[99] These three commentaries are ignored by Tibetan scholars in their commentaries on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. However, non-Tibetan scholars such as Saito, Crosby, and Skilton consider the Kawa Paltsek translation to be "closer to the original (Sanskrit) composition."[100]

The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra was also translated into the Chinese and Mongolian languages. It was translated from Sanskrit into Chinese[101] by T'ien Hsi-tsai (Devaśānti

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scholar Sarvajñadeva, and a Tibetan translator, Buddhist priest, dPal-brtsegs, translated, edited and completed [the text in Tibetan]." The Tibetan manuscript reads: [rgya gar gyi mkhan po sar va jña deva dang zhu chen gyi lo tsa ba ban 'de dpal brtsegs kyis bsgyur cing zhus te gtan la phab pa'o].

95 For the discussion on Śāntideva [zhi ba lha] and Akṣayamati [blo gros mi zad pa], see *A Study of Akṣayamati* pages 20-22. Tshechok Ling Yongdzin Yeshe Gyaltshan [tshe mchog gling yongs 'dzin ye shes rgyal mtshan] (1713-1793) does not hesitate to say in his *lam rim bla brgyud*, page 291.6, that Akṣayamati is an epithet for Śāntideva ['di'i blo gros mi zad pa zhes pa rgyal sras zhi ba lha'i mtshan gyi rnam grangs yin no].

96 For an analysis of Peking No. 5280 and No. 5281, see *Suvarṇadvīpa's Commentaries.*

97 paṇḍita mi mnyam khol po

98 blo ldan shes rab

99 See A Study of Akṣayamati, pages 57-85.

100 See The Bodhicaryāvatāra, a new translation, page xxxi and A Study of Akṣayamati.

101 P'u t'i hsing ching, Taisho No. 1662, vol. 32, 543c-562a

from Kashmir?) between 980 and 1001. This Chinese translation has 782 stanzas in eight chapters.[102] Chapters four and five, as found in the current Sanskrit edition, are missing, and this translation identifies Nāgārjuna as its author. In 1305 a Mongolian translation was made from Tibetan texts by Chökyi Özer.[103]

In 1892 parts of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra were translated for the first time into French by Louis de La Vallée Poussin. In 1909 L. D. Barnett published a partial English version, followed again in 1920 by Louis Finot's French rendering. Then, in 1923 Richard Schmidt provided a German translation of the text. These four pioneering works, all of which derive from Sanskrit originals, led to the publication of many Western-language translations, based both on Sanskrit and Tibetan texts.[104]

Indian Commentaries on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra

The Tangyur[105] contains ten translations of Indian commentaries on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra.[106] Butön organized his Tangyur based on the old Narthang edition,[107] circa 1334 in Zhalu.[108] Butön compiled a catalogue to the Tangyur[109] one year later in which he incorporated all ten Indian commentaries. What follows is a list of these important commentaries for the interested student of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra.[110] Note that except for the commentary written by Prajñākaramati, all of their Sanskrit versions are lost.

1. *sher 'byung bka' 'grel:* byang chub kyi spyod pa la 'jug pa'i bka' 'grel; skr. Bodhicaryāvatāra-pañjikā; written in Sanskrit by the Indian scholar Prajñākaramati[111] (950-1030), translated by Marpa Chökyi Wangchuk[112] (1012-

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102 See Weiterwirken des Werkes, page 31.

103 Chökyi Özer [chos kyi 'od zer]. See *Quellenbezug Eines Mongolischen Tanjurtextes.* In this treatise, Weller compares the Mongolian translation with various Tibetan sources. He concludes that the Mongolian translation must have been based on several Tibetan sources, although the colophon of the Mongolian translation states that Chökyi Özer translated the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra from the Indian language (most likely Sanskrit). See *Quellenbezug Eines Mongolischen Tanjurtextes*, page 42.

104 For details on the translation history of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra into Western languages, see *Buddhist Literature*, pages 262-353.

105 Peking vol. 100

106 The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra root text, *spyod 'jug rtsa ba*, is found in Peking No. 5272, vol. 99.

107 snar thang

108 zha lu

109 dkar chag nor bu rin chen dbang gi rgyal po'i phreng ba

110 For a detailed analysis of all 10 Indian commentaries see *Weiterwirken des Werkes* by Siglinde Dietz, pages 35-38; *A Study of Akṣayamati* by Akira Saito, pages 22-23; and *Altruism and Reality*, pages 3-5.

111 shes rab 'byung gnas blo gros

112 mar pa chos kyi dbang phyug

1096) and Darma Drakpa,[113] revised by Yönten Gyamtso,[114] Peking No. 5273, vol. 100.

No commentary is given to the tenth chapter. This text is the only complete known commentary that still exists in Sanskrit[115] and is considered by Tibetan scholars to be the most important among the ten Indian commentaries on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra preserved in the Tangyur. The author, Prajñākaramati, lived during the 11th century[116] and was one of the Six Paṇḍitas of the Gates[117] of Vikramaśīla.

2. *rnam bshad bka' 'grel:* byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i rnam par bshad pa'i bka' 'grel; skr. bodhisattva-caryāvatāra-vivṛtti-pañjikā; author anonymous, Peking No. 5274, vol. 100. Saito identified this text as a commentary to the Sanskrit version of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra that was also used by Kawa Paltsek. The whole text follows the outline of Kawa Paltsek's text as found in the Tun-huang version and is structured into nine chapters, the second and third chapters being fused into one. While all nine chapters are examined fully, the last chapter on dedication is dealt with only briefly. Saito edited the eighth chapter, the chapter on transcendental knowledge,[118] and compared it with the almost identical version of the *spyod 'jug rnam bshad,* Peking No. 5279.[119]

3. *spyod 'jug legs sbyar:* byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i legs par sbyar ba; skr. bodhisattva-caryāvatāra-saṃskāra; written by Kalyāṇadeva, Peking No. 5275, vol. 100. This is a commentary on all ten chapters.

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113 gnyan dar ma grags pa

114 yon tan rgya mtsho

115 The Sanskrit text was first edited by Louis de la Vallée Poussin. See the introduction in *Prajñākaramati's commentary*: "The text of the Bodhicaryāvatāra-pañjikā is preserved in two MSS, now forming part of the collection of the Government of Bengal at Calcutta, both acquired by Professor Haraprasād Śāstrī. The first is in the Nepalese character and contains (with several large lacunae) the whole of the work. (Except the tenth chapter) The second, in Maithili character, contains only the commentary on the ninth chapter." Further editions of Prajñākaramati's Sanskrit commentary were made by P.L. Vaidya and Dwaraka Das Shastri.

116 For biographical notes on Prajñākaramati, see *Tāranātha's History of Buddhism*, pages 296-297 and *mkhas btsun bzang po Vol. I*, page 246.

117 The Six Paṇḍitas of the Gates [mkhas pa'i sgo drug] or the Six Gatekeeper Paṇḍitas was an honorary title for the principal teachers at Vikramaśīla University during the reign of King Canaka of the Pāla dynasty. They were responsible for specific disciplines and required anyone seeking admission as a student to engage with one of them in debate. Lists of the Six Gatekeepers are mentioned in *Tāranātha's History of Buddhism* and the *Blue Annals*. According to *Tāranātha's History of Buddhism*, page 295, Prajñākaramati was the keeper of the Southern Gate; according to the *Blue Annals*, page 206, he was the keeper of the Western Gate. For further details, see also *Crystal Mirror Vol. VI*, pages 109-111.

118 shes rab

119 *A Study of Akṣayamati* by Akira Saito, pages 57-85.

4. *kṛṣṇa dka' gnas:* byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i rtogs par dka' ba'i gnas gtan la dbab pa'i gzhung; skr. bodhisattva-caryāvatāra-duravabodha-nirṇaya-nāma-grantha; written in Sanskrit by the Indian scholar Kṛṣṇapāda,[120] translated from Sanskrit into Tibetan by Kṛṣṇapāda and the translator Chökyi Drakpa,[121] Peking No. 5276, vol. 100. This short commentary discusses difficult points of the text.
5. *vai ro bka' 'grel:* byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i bka' 'grel; skr. bodhisattva-caryāvatāra-pañjikā; written by Vairocanarakṣita, Peking No. 5277, vol. 100. Vairocanarakṣita was a great scholar from Vikramaśīla and lived in the middle of the 11th century. The author deals with all ten chapters of the text.
6. *sher le'u bka' 'grel:* shes rab le'u'i bka' 'grel; skr. prajñā-pariccheda-pañjikā; author anonymous, Peking No. 5278, vol. 100. This text was translated by Paṇḍita Minyam Khölpo[122] and the translator-monk Loden Sherab[123] according to a request made by Litön Dorje Gyaltsen.[124] Saito identified this text as a commentary to the Sanskrit version of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra that was also used by Kawa Paltsek. This commentary deals only with the chapter on transcendental knowledge.
7. *spyod 'jug rnam bshad:* byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i rnam par bshad pa; skr. bodhisattva-caryāvatāra-vivṛtti; author anonymous, Peking No. 5279, vol. 100. This commentary, also based on the Sanskrit version of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra used by Kawa Paltsek, known to us from the Tun-huang version, deals exclusively with the chapter on transcendental knowledge. Akira Saito critically editied this text and compared with the almost identical version of chapter eight of the *rnam bshad bka' 'grel*, Peking No. 5274.[125]
8. *spyod 'jug don sum cu rtsa drug:* byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i don sum cu rtsa drug bsdus pa; skr. bodhisattva-caryāvatāra-ṣaṭtriṃśat-piṇḍārtha; written by Dharmapāla, the master from Suvarṇadvīpa,[126] Peking No. 5280, vol. 100. This text was requested by Kamalarakṣita and Dīpaṃkara (Atiśa 982-1054) and was translated into Tibetan by Paṇḍita Dīpaṃkara (Atiśa) and the translator

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120 kṛṣṇa / nag po pa, lived from the end of the 10th until the middle of the 11th century. See *Life of Kṛṣṇācārya*, page 144.

121 chos kyi grags pa

122 paṇḍita mi mnyam khol po

123 blo ldan shes rab

124 li ston rdo rje rgyal mtshan

125 See *Study of Akṣayanati*, pages 57-85.

126 Dharmapāla, the master from Suvarṇadvīpa [gser gling gi bla ma chos skyong], is also known as Dharmakīrti from Suvarṇadvīpa [gser gling pa chos kyi grags pa].

Tsültrim Gyalwa.[127] As a metrical synopsis of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, it condenses the entire text into 36 main points [don sum cu rtsa drug bsdus pa].

9. *spyod 'jug don bsdus pa:* byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i don bsdus pa; skr. bodhisattva-caryāvatāra-piṇḍārtha; written by Dharmapāla, the master from Suvarṇadvīpa, Peking No. 5281, vol. 100. Translated into Tibetan by the Indian scholar Dīpaṃkara (Atiśa) and the Tibetan translator Tsültrim Gyalwa,[128] this is a short metrical synopsis of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra that condenses the entire text into eleven main points.[129]

10. *vibhūti dgongs 'grel:* byang chub kyi spyod pa la 'jug pa'i dgongs pa'i 'grel pa khyad par gsal byed ces bya ba; skr. bodhicaryāvatāra-tātparyapañjikā-viśeṣadyotanī-nāma; written in Sanskrit and translated into Tibetan by the Indian scholar Vibhūticandra (11th century) from Jagantala Monastery in East India, Peking No. 5282, vol. 100. This commentary deals with all ten chapters of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra.

Important Tibetan Commentaries on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra

Many great masters and scholars of Tibet wrote commentaries on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, and many of these commentaries were and still are used in monastic universities in Tibet, India, Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim, and Ladak. A selection of some of the more famous commentators follows:

Sönam Tsemo[130] (1142-1182), Lhopa Kunkhyen Rinchen Pal,[131] Ngülchu Thogme Zangpo[132] (1295-1369), Butön Rinchen Drup[133] (1290-1364), Lama Dampa Sönam

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[127] lo tsa ba tshul khrim rgyal ba

[128] tshul khrims rgyal ba

[129] gtso bo'i don bcu gcig bsdus pa

[130] Sönam Tsemo [bsod nams rtse mo] wrote a famous commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. See *bsod nams rtse mo 'grel pa*. He was a direct student of Chawa Chö Seng [phya ba chos seng] (1109-1169) and based his commentary on his teacher Chawa Chö Seng's commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. See *gangs can mkhas grub rim byon ming mdzod*, page 1069.

[131] Lhopa Kunkhyen Rinchen Pal [lho pa kun mkhyen rin chen dpal] was a direct student of Sakya Paṇḍita Kunga Gyaltshen [sa skya paṇḍita kun dga' rgyal mtshan] (1182-1251), from whom he received detailed teachings on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. He wrote his commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra as a synopsis [zin bris] of the teachings he had received from Sakya Paṇḍita. See *zin bris 'jam dpal zhal lung*.

[132] Ngülchu Thogme Zangpo [dngul chu thogs med bzang po] wrote a famous commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. According to Khenpo Ape, the three—Butön [bu ston], Lama Dampa Sönam Gyaltsen Pal Zangpo [bla ma dam pa bsod nams rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po] and Ngülchu Thogme Zangpo [dngul chu thogs med bzang po]—were students and teachers of each other. See the introduction to *dngul chu thogs med 'grel pa* as well as *dngul chu thogs med rnam thar*, page 15.

Gyaltsen Pal Zangpo[134] (1312-1375), Sazang Mati Penchen Jamyang Lodro[135] (1294-1376), Tsongkhapa Lobzang Drakpa[136] (1357-1419), Gyaltsab Dharma Rinchen[137] (1364-1432), Pawo Tsuglak Trengwa[138] (1504-1566), Drugpa Pema Karpo[139] (1527-1592), Mipham Rinpoche[140] (1846-1912), Khenpo Zhenga[141] (1871-1927), Thubten

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133 In 1338 Butön [bu ston] wrote his famous commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. See *bu ston 'grel chen*.

134 In 1338 Lama Dampa Sönam Gyaltsen Pal Zangpo [bla ma dam pa bsod nams rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po] wrote a famous commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. See *bsod nams rgyal mtshan 'grel pa*.

135 Sazang Mati Penchen Jamyang Lodro [sa bzang ma ti paṇ chen 'jam dbyangs blo gros], also known as Lodro Gyaltshen [blo gros rgyal mtshan], wrote a famous commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. See *sa bzang 'grel chen*. He was a direct student of Lama Dampa Sönam Gyaltsen Pal Zangpo [bla ma dam pa bsod nams rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po].

136 Tsongkhapa Lobzang Drakpa [tsong kha pa blo bzang grags pa] wrote a famous commentary on the ninth chapter of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. See *blo bzang grags pa sher 'grel*.

137 Gyaltsab Dharma Rinchen [rgyal tshab dharma rin chen], a direct student of Rendawa [red mda' ba] (1349-1412) and Tsongkhapa Lobzang Drakpa, wrote a famous commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. See *dar ṭik*.

138 In 1565, one year before his death, Pawo Tsuglak Trengwa [dpa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba] wrote a very extensive commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. See *gtsug lag 'grel chen*.

139 'brug pa pad ma dkar po. See *pad dkar 'bru 'grel*.

140 Ju Mipham Jamyang Namgyal ['ju mi pham 'jam dbyangs rnam rgyal] received teachings from Paltrül Rinpoche on the chapter concerning transcendental knowledge and shortly thereafter, in 1878, wrote a commentary to this chapter. See *nor bu ke ta ka*. Then, in 1889, Mipham Rinpoche wrote a refutation of the objections raised by the Gelukpa Tragkar Tulku [brag dkar sprul sku] from Drepung ['bras spungs] against his commentary *nor bu ke ta ka*. See *brgal lan nyin byed snang ba (brag dkar brgal lan)*. Around 1892, Mipham wrote another refutation of the objections to his interpretation raised by the Gelukpa Palriwa Lobzang Rabsel [dpal ri ba blo bzang rab gsal]. See *gzhan gyis brtsad pa'i lan mdor bsdus pa (rab gsal brgal lan)*. During the years 1878 and 1880 Mipham Rinpoche engaged in a public debate on the ninth chapter of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra with the famous scholar Japa Do-Ngag ['ja' pa mdo sngags] of the New Translation School. The debate lasted for several days during which Paltrül Rinpoche acted as the referee. For further details about the debate as well as about Mipham Rinpoche's life and work, see *Beacon of Certainty*, pages 19-39; *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, pages 869-880; *Among Tibetan Texts*, pages 227-233; *Reflexive Nature of Awareness*; and *Werke des Mi-pham rnam-rgyal*.

141 Gyakung Khenpo Zhenga [rgya bskung mkhan po gzhan dga'], also known as Khenpo Chökyi Nangwa [mkhan po chos kyi snang ba], was a student of Ön Urgyen Tendzin Norbu [dbon u rgyan bstan 'dzin nor bu] with whom he studied for thirteen years and from whom he received the oral explanation lineage of Paltrül Rinpoche. Based on these teachings, he wrote his famous 'annotation commentary' [mchan 'grel] on the 'thirteen great textbooks' [gzhung chen bcu gsum] of Indian origin, including the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. See *spyod 'jug 'mchan 'grel*.

Chökyi Drakpa,[142] Khenpo Kunpal[143] (1862-1943), Zhechen Gyaltsab[144] (1871-1926) and Lodro Gyaltshen.[145]

Buddhist Scholasticism at Śrī Siṃha Shedra in East Tibet

The interpretation of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is closely linked to Buddhist scholasticism in Tibet. Buddhist scholasticism was brought from India to Tibet by the Indian paṇḍitas invited during the time of the three great kings: Songtsen Gampo,[146] Trisong Detsen,[147] and Tri Ralpachen.[148] The first centers of learning were places such as Samye,[149] Pangtang Kame,[150] and Ushang Doyi Lhakhang,[151] where great Indian masters[152] trained Tibetan translators[153] and helped them prepare exact translations of many sūtras and tantras from Sanskrit into the Tibetan language.

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142 Thubten Chökyi Drakpa [thub bstan chos kyi grags pa], born in the 19th century, also known as Minyag Kunzang Sönam [mi nyag kun bzang bsod nams], was a direct student of Paltrül Rinpoche and wrote three commentaries on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. See *mi nyag kun bzang 'grel chen, mi nyag kun bzang sher 'grel 1* and *mi nyag kun bzang sher 'grel 2*. An English translation of *mi nyag kun bzang sher 'grel 1* was completed by the Padmakara Translation Group, see *Two Buddhist Commentaries*.

143 mkhan po kun dpal / mkhan po kun bzang dpal ldan. See *kun dpal 'grel pa*.

144 Zhechen Gyaltsab [zhe chen rgyal tshab], also known as Zhechen Pema Namgyal [zhe chen padma rnam rgyal], a direct student of Mipham Rinpoche, wrote two important commentaries on the ninth chapter of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. See *sher le'u'i 'bru 'grel nor bu'i sgron me* and *shes rab le'i mchan 'grel don gsal me long*.

145 See sher 'grel snying po'i don gsal.

146 srong btsan sgam po reigned circa 618-641.

147 khri srong lde btsan reigned during the second half of the 8th century, 756-797.

148 khri ral pa can reigned circa 815-838.

149 bsam yas

150 The fortress at Pangthang Kame ['phang thang ka med], located in Yerpa, was built by Tride Tsuk [khri lde btsug] in the first half of the 8th century. The *Blue Annals* mention a flood at Pangthang during the reign of Trisong Detsen. Pangtang Kame is also the birthplace of Trisong Detsen. See *From bKa' bstan bcos to bKa' 'gyur*, page 91.

151 u shang rdo'i lha khang was erected by King Ralpachen.

152 Among many other paṇḍitas, five great masters [slob dpon chen po rnam lnga] were invited to Tibet during the reign of King Trisong Detsen: Padmasambhava from Oḍḍiyāna, Vimalamitra from Kashmir, the Preceptor and Bodhisattva Śāntarakṣita from Zahor (Sahor), the Indian master Kamalaśīla and the Ceylonese master Dānaśīla. See *klong chen chos 'byung*, pages 303. During the reign of King Tride Songtsen, the son of Trisong Detsen, six other masters are mentioned in particular: the Preceptor Prajñāvarma, Śākya Siṃha, Surendrabodhi, Jinamitra, Dānaśīla, and Vīryasiṃhakara. See *klong chen chos 'byung*, page 372.

153 The first and most famous of the early translators were 'the seven trial translators' [lo tsā ba sad mi mi bdun]: Pa Mañjuśrī [dpa' mañjuśrī], Tsangthen Lendra [rtsangs then lendra], Tren Karamute [bran karamute], Pagor Vairocana [pagor vairocana], Khön Nagenda ['khon nagendra], Tsang Devendra [rtsangs devendra], and Lang Sugata [rlangs sugata]. All of them

Later, during the reign of King Ralpachen, many monastic centers were created following the tradition of the Indian paṇḍitas. King Ralpachen himself completed 108 Buddhist building projects that his forefathers had pledged to build but could not finish during their lifetimes.[154] He also created twelve philosophical colleges, six monasteries, and six retreat centers.[155] Thus, in the early days of Buddhism in Tibet, practitioners studied sūtra and practiced tantra in the tradition of the Indian paṇḍitas.

During the reign of King Langdarma these practice and scholastic centers were dismantled, the Indian scholars and translators left Tibet, and many practitioners went into hiding.

With the beginning of the Later Translation Period, from the time of Rinchen Zangpo onward, Buddhist scholasticism was revived throughout Central and Southwest Tibet.[156] The Nyingma, Old Kadampa, Sakya, Kagyü, and later Gelugpa Schools developed great monastic universities. Scholasticism in the Nyingma School was preserved, on one hand, by great masters who appeared over the centuries such as Longchenpa and Rongdzom Mahāpaṇḍita, and, on the other hand, by the great monastic institutions of Central Tibet such as Samye, Mindröl Ling,[157] and Dorje Trak.[158]

The Nyingma School in East Tibet produced great masters and scholars in many places such as Kathok, Dzogchen, Palyül, and Zhechen. However, only during the second half of the 19th century were institutional philosophical studies at Buddhist universities made available to a wider audience in East Tibet's Nyingma monasteries. Before that time, the main focus of the Nyingma School in East Tibet was on the

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received monks' ordination from Śāntarakṣita. Equally famous were Kawa Paltsek [ska ba dpal brtsegs], Cokro Lui Gyaltshen [cog ro lu'i rgyal mtshan], Zhang Nanam Yeshes De [zhang sna nam ye shes sde], Ma Rinchen Chog [rma rin chen mchog], and Nyag Jñāna Kumāra [gnyags jñāna kumāra]. Minor translators included Denma Tsemang [ldan ma rtse mang], Nub Namkhay Nyingpo [snubs nam mkha'i snying po], and Acaya Yeshe Yang [acarya ye shes dbyangs]. See *klong chen chos 'byung*, page 304.

154 See *klong chen chos 'byung*, page 374: mes kyi gtsug lag khang brgya rtsa brgyad bzhengs par dam bcas pa'i grangs ma tshang pa'i lhag ma rnams kha bkang /

155 See *klong chen chos 'byung*, page 376: de'i dus chos grva chen mo gsum du khod bshams te / thos bsam blo sbyong gi grva bcu gnyis / mkhas btsun stangs 'bul gyi grva drug / smra bcad sems phyos kyi grva drug ste grva bcu gnyis la sogs pa bshams te /

156 The first great centers of Buddhist scholasticism at the dawn of the Later Translation Period were Sangphu Monastery [gsang phu dgon pa] and Sakya [sa skya]. The great translator Ngok Lotsawa Loden Sherab [rngog lo tsā ba blo ldan shes rab] (1059-1109) taught extensively at Sangphu and Sakya Paṇḍita [sa skya paṇḍita] (1182-1251) at Sakya. Sangphu Monastery was founded in 1073 by Ngok Lotsawa Loden Sherab's uncle Ngok Lekpey Sherab [rngog legs pa'i shes rab]. Sakya Monastery was established also in the year 1073 by Konchok Gyalpo [dkon mchog rgyal po].

157 Mindröl Ling [smin sgrol gling] was founded in 1670 by Terdag Lingpa (1646-1714).

158 Dorje Trak [rdo rje brag] was founded in 1632 by the Third Rigdzin, Ngagi Wangpo [rig 'dzin ngag gi dbang po].

practice of meditation, while philosophical studies were pursued at Buddhist universities in Central Tibet.

According to Khenpo Chöga, in general the Nyingma School's Buddhist shedra[159] follow the structure of the Nālandā monastic university in India, which emphasizes maintaining the entire Buddhist tradition through nine scholastic activities.[160]

The first three scholastic activities are study, contemplation, and meditation.[161] A student who aspires to become a scholar must first listen to the teachings and thoroughly study the dharma. He must repeatedly contemplate the meaning of those teachings. Finally, to internalize the teachings, he must meditate on their meaning. Thus, he accomplishes something that benefits him personally. The next three activities of a scholar are teaching, debate, and composition.[162] For the benefit of others, a scholar teaches the dharma, engages in debates about its meaning to clear away doubts in the minds of others, and writes compositions and treatises. The last three scholastic activities are founding universities, developing retreat centers, and engaging in Buddhist activities.[163] For the benefit of both himself and others, the scholar creates Buddhist universities[164] so that his students can study the dharma, and he develops retreat centers[165] so that they can practice meditation. He also engages in Buddhist activities such as building monasteries, stūpas, and so forth.

The Nyingma School maintains a system in which scholasticism and meditation are practiced as a unity.[166] Exemplary masters such as Vairocana, Longchen Rabjam, Rongzom Mahāpaṇḍita, Paltrül Rinpoche, and Mipham Rinpoche were equally accomplished scholars and yogins. These great masters took upon themselves the task of maintaining the entire teaching of Buddhism by preserving this unity of both the scholastic and practice traditions.

Institutional scholasticism and the founding of Buddhist universities in the Nyingma School of East Tibet began in the middle of the 19th century during the time of great masters such as Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo[167] (1820-1892), Kongtrül Lodro Thaye[168] (1813-1899), and Paltrül Rinpoche (1808-1887). East Tibetan monasteries such as

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[159] bshad grva / chos grva

[160] mkhas pa'i bya ba dgu

[161] thos bsam sgom gsum

[162] 'chad rtsod rtsom gsum

[163] bshad sgrub las gsum

[164] bshad grva

[165] sgrub grva

[166] mkhas sgrub zung 'brel gyi lugs srol

[167] 'jam dbyangs mkhyen brtse'i dbang po

[168] kong sprul blo gros mtha' yas

Kathok,[169] Dzogchen, Palyül,[170] and Zhechen,[171] as well as the Sakya monastery Dzongsar,[172] and the Kagyü monastery Palpung,[173] founded universities and set up rigorous Buddhist study curricula. With the founding of Śrī Siṃha Shedra, around 1842, Dzogchen Monastery was probably the first of the Nyingma monasteries in East Tibet to establish an institutional system for producing scholars and preceptors on a grand scale.

Called 'Rudam Orgyen Samten Chöling', Dzogchen Monastery was founded in 1685[174] by the first Dzogchen Rinpoche, Pema Rigdzin (1625-1697). Later, the first Dodrupchen Jigme Thrinley Özer (1745-1821) sent his student Gyalse Zhenphen

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169 The Vajra Seat of Kathok [kaḥ thog rdo rje gdan] was founded in 1159 by Kathok Dampa Deshek [kaḥ thog dam pa bde gshegs] (1122-1192). Mipham Rinpoche (1846-1912) charged his student Khenpo Kunpal with the task of creating a shedra [bshad grva] at Kathok. Khenpo Kunpal established this as commanded in the year 1906 [rab tshes me rta lo]. The shedra was named Shedrup Norbu Lhünpo [bshad sgrub nor bu lhun po]. See *kaḥ thog lo rgyus*, pages 145 and 155. Subsequently, Khenpo Ngagwang Palzang [mkhan po ngag dbang dpal bzang], also known as Khenpo Ngagchung [mkhan po ngag chung] (1879-1941), taught for five years at this shedra. See *kaḥ thog lo rgyus*, page 148, and *Among Tibetan Texts*, pages 28-29.

170 Palyül Namgyal Jangchub Ling [dpal yul rnam rgyal byang chub gling] was founded in 1665 by Rigdzin Kunzang Sherab [rig 'dzin kun bzang shes rab] (1636-1698). The shedra at Palyül was created in 1922 [chu khyi lo] under the second Pema Norbu [padma nor bu] (1887-1932). Khenpo Ngagchung [mkhan po ngag chung] gave an initial three-day lecture as part of the opening ceremony. At the beginning only fifty monks attended the shedra. Khenpo Ngagchung studied as a young man at the Śrī Siṃha Shedra at Dzogchen and became the main khenpo at Kathok.

171 Zhechen Monastery [zhe chen dar rgyas gling] was founded in 1734 [shing stag lo] by the second Rabjam Rinpoche, Gyurme Kunzang Namgyal [rab 'jams sku phreng gnyis pa 'gyur med kun bzang rnam rgyal]. According to Khenpo Chöga, it appears that the shedra at Zhechen was established much later than Śrī Siṃha Shedra.

172 Dzongsar Trashi Lhatse Monastery [rdzong gsar bkra shis lha rtse'i dgon pa] was founded in 1253 by Chögyal Phakpa [chos rgyal 'phags pa] (1235-1280). The Dzongsar Shedra [rdzong gsar bshad grva] was planned by Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo ['jam dbyangs mkhyen brtse'i dbang po], but it was Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodro (1893-1959), who, at the age of 26, actually founded it in 1918. The shedra was named Khamche Shedrup Dargye Ling [khams bye bshad sgrub dar rgyal gling]. He invited Khenpo Zhenga from Śrī Siṃha Shedra of Dzogchen to be the first khenpo in charge of studies. See *Masters of Meditation*, page 279. For further details see our chapter on the history of Dzongsar Shedra.

173 Palpung Monastery [dpal spungs] was founded in 1727 by the eighth Situpa, Mahāpaṇḍita Situ Chökyi Jungne [situ paṇ chen chos kyi 'byung gnas] (1699-1774). It was Situ Pema Wangchuk Gyalpo [situ padma dbang phyug rgyal po] (1886-1952) from Palpung Monastery who requested Khenpo Zhenga (1871-1927) to write the famous annotation commentaries to all thirteen great textbooks. The annotation commentary to the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra was written by Khenpo Zhenga at Palpung monastery. Khenpo Zhenga taught the entire 'thirteen philosophical textbooks of Indian origin' to Situ Pema Wangchuk Gyalpo and founded at that time the shedra at Palpung Monastery.

174 However, the *tshig mdzod chen mo* says that Dzogchen Monastery was founded in 1675.

Thaye[175] (1800-?) to a certain place in the valley of Dzogchen, where he had a vision of the great Dzogchen master Śrī Siṃha sitting on a rock.

In honor of Śrī Siṃha, Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye, the fourth Dzogchen Rinpoche, Mingyur Namkhai Dorje[176] (1793-?), Sengtruk Pema Trashi,[177] Dzogchen Khenpo Pema Dorje[178] (19th century), and Do Khyentse Yeshe Dorje[179] (1800-1866) established the Dzogchen Śrī Siṃha Shedra[180] at the very place where Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye had seen Śrī Siṃha in his vision. Since Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye rebuilt Dzogchen Monastery in 1842 after it was totally destroyed by an earthquake, it is likely that Śrī Siṃha Shedra was founded around that time.

The curriculum at Śrī Siṃha Shedra

To understand how Tibetan scholars write commentaries on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, one must take a look at their educational system. Since the time of Nālandā, the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra was taught by an elite group of highly specialized monk-scholars to an exclusively male audience of scholarly monks. The didactic language in use at Śrī Siṃha Shedra was and still is classical Buddhist Tibetan, a very technical jargon understood only by those prepared through training in the vast field of Buddhist philosophy and sciences. Tibetan commentaries on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra reflect this enormous range of knowledge and thus force the reader to seek guidance from representatives of the Tibetan scholastic tradition.

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175 Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye [rgyal sras gzhan phan mtha' yas] was considered to be an incarnation of Śāntarakṣita. He studied with the first Dodrupchen Jigme Trinley Özer ['jigs med phrin las 'od zer], Gyalwe Nyugu [rgyal ba'i myu gu] (1765-1843), the fourth Dzogchen Rinpoche, Mingyur Namkhai Dorje, as well as Sengtruk Pema Trashi [seng phrug pad ma bkra shis] and many others.

176 mi 'gyur nam mkha'i rdo rje was a direct student of the first Dodrupchen Jigme Trinley Özer. For biographical notes on Mingyur Namkhai Dorje, see *Masters of Meditation*, pages 174-178. Among his students were Paltrül Rinpoche, Adzom Drugpa, Mipham Rinpoche, and Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye.

177 Sengtruk Pema Trashi [seng phrug pad ma bkra shis], also known as Pema Trashi [padma bkra shis], studied as a young man for 15-20 years at Mindröl Ling Monastery. He was the main khenpo at Dzogchen Monastery and became the teacher of Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye, who received from him a commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, the bodhisattva vows, and numerous other teachings.

178 Dzogchen Khenpo Pema Dorje [rdzogs chen mkhan po pad ma rdo rje] was a 19th century master who studied with Gyalse Zhenpen Thaye, the fourth Dzogchen Rinpoche, and Khenchen Sengtruk Pema Trashi. He was a classmate of Paltrül Rinpoche and one of the foremost khenpos of Dzogchen Monastery. For biographical notes see *Masters of Meditation*, page 200.

179 mdo mkhyen brtse ye shes rdo rje

180 śrī siṃha bshad grva, śrī siṃha chos grva.

The curriculum at Buddhist universities of the Nyingma School culminates at the highest level in the awarding of the title of 'Zhungluk Rabjampa', which means 'Teacher of Infinite Textbooks', and, on a lower level, in the title 'khenpo',[181] which means 'preceptor'. A khenpo is authorized to give the vows[182] of individual liberation,[183] i.e., he is a preceptor of monastic discipline.[184] The main task of a khenpo is to uphold the unbroken ordination lineage of monks and nuns. In addition to the meaning of preceptor, the title khenpo can also mean 'scholar' or 'paṇḍita'.[185] A khenpo who functions as a preceptor must be a fully-ordained monk. He must be learned in the rules of monastic discipline but not necessarily in all of Buddhist philosophy and the sciences.[186]

Students at Śrī Siṃha Shedra are exclusively monks[187] who enter at the age of eighteen and may then take full ordination[188] at the age of twenty. If they complete the rigorous seventeen-year curriculum[189] of study and practice, they may be appointed khenpo and perhaps be sent to another monastery to maintain the tradition of monastic discipline and scholasticism[190] there.

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181 mkhan po; skr. upādhyāya. A khenpo must have kept the prātimokṣa vows himself flawlessly for at least ten years in a central country such as India, and for five years in a border country such as Tibet, in order to pass them on to someone else. He must be learned in all monastic ceremonies and be knowledgeable in all aspects of the vinaya, the monastic discipline. For a detailed explanation see *Buddhist Ethics*, pages 44-46.

182 sdom pa; skr. saṃvara

183 so thar; skr. prātimokṣa

184 'dul ba; vinaya

185 paṇḍita

186 Buddhist philosophy and the sciences are part of what is commonly known as the ten sciences [rig gnas bcu], which are subdivided into the five greater sciences and the five lesser sciences. The five greater sciences [rig gnas che ba lnga] comprise the science of arts [bzo rig gnas], medical science [gso ba'i rig gnas], the science of linguistics [sgra'i rig gnas], the science of logic [gtan tshigs kyi rig gnas], and the inner sciences of Buddhist philosophy, 'esoterics' [nang don rig pa]. The first four of these sciences are also called the 'four common sciences' [thun mong gi rig gnas bzhi]. The five lesser sciences [rig gnas chung ba lnga] consist of poetics [snyan ngag], synonymics [mngon brjod], prosody [sdeb sbyor], drama [zlos gar], and astrology [skar rtsis]. To be learned in the inner sciences means that one is learned in both sūtra and tantra.

187 According to Śrī Siṃha tradition, a student is allowed to receive the monk vows [dge tshul gyi sdom pa] from the age of sixteen years. Note that lay people and nuns were not allowed to study at Śrī Siṃha Shedra.

188 According to Śrī Siṃha tradition, a student is allowed to receive the vows of a fully ordained monk [dge slong gyi sdom pa] from the age of twenty.

189 mdzad rim

190 Khenpo Chöga received his training at Śrī Siṃha Shedra shortly after the end of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976), when the teaching of Buddhism was again permitted in Tibet. He studied for ten years the five major and five minor sciences. He began teaching as a khenpo at Śrī Siṃha Shedra in the late 1980s. Due to the special situation prevailing in Tibet at the time

The very best student is often appointed the Khenchen Tripa,[191] a title meaning 'Throne-Holding Great Preceptor', and then takes a four-year appointment as the main teacher at Śrī Siṃha Shedra. The four-year term as Khenchen Tripa can neither be extended nor repeated for another four-year term.

Not only is the Khenchen Tripa responsible for the spiritual education of the monks, but he also teaches at Śrī Siṃha Shedra and maintains the monastic discipline at both the shedra and the monastery.[192] In addition, he presides over the bimonthly poṣadha[193] of the monks and is the main teacher during the annual 'Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra Seminar',[194] which takes place in the 'Saṃgha Garden Enclosure' next to Dzogchen Monastery. The Khenchen Tripa at Śrī Siṃha Shedra teaches while sitting on a special throne, called the 'Wish-fulfilling Jewel of the Preceptor's Throne'.[195] The first students to obtain the Khenchen Tripa post were Khenchen Pema Dorje[196] and Paltrül Rinpoche.

Many khenpos enter into strict retreat after they complete their seventeen years of study. While studying at Śrī Siṃha Shedra, they dedicate 75 percent of their time to study and 25 percent to meditation. Later, when staying in Dzogchen Monastery's retreat center, they practice 75 percent of the time and dedicate 25 percent to study. Thus, they always maintain the proper balance between study and practice.

In order to become a khenpo, one must complete the entire seventeen-year shedra program as a monk, having both studied the textbooks and maintained the monastic discipline[197] of the full monk's ordination. Following this the student is awarded the

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and his great intelligence, he was made khenpo before he completed the traditional seventeen-year study period.

191 mkhen chen khri pa

192 The monastic discipline at Dzogchen Monastery is enforced by four disciplinarians [dge skos bzhi], by two secret informants [tho rdzi gnyis], and by 24 monastic servants [lha g.yog gnyis bcu rtsa bzhi].

193 Bimonthly poṣadha ceremonies are held either at Śrī Siṃha Shedra or at Dzogchen Monastery. According to the *Illuminator*, poṣadha [gso sbyong] literally means "healing and purifying" or "repairing and purifying." It is the name of the principal ceremony conducted by ordained Buddhist monks and nuns in order to purify the breakage of vows and restore the purity of ordination.

194 spyod 'jug mchod pa / spyod rgan ma

195 mkhan khri yid bzhin nor bu

196 Dzogchen Khenpo Pema Dorje [rdzogs chen mkhan po pad ma rdo rje] was a 19th century master who studied with Gyalse Zhenpen Thaye, the fourth Dzogchen Rinpoche, and Khenchen Sengtruk Pema Trashi. He was a classmate of Paltrül Rinpoche and one of the foremost khenpos of Dzogchen Monastery. For biographical notes see *Masters of Meditation*, page 200.

197 lta srung gnyis: dpe cha lta dang tshul khrims srung

title 'khenpo' and receives a diploma,[198] authorizing him to teach the dharma and pass on monk's vows as a preceptor.

To become a paṇḍita, the student must become learned in all five sciences.[199] This is accomplished by first completing the seventeen years of study at Śrī Siṃha Shedra and studying another ten years with specialized teachers in the sciences. The title 'Teacher of Infinite Textbooks' is identical with the title 'paṇḍita', 'scholar' or 'scholar of scholars'.[200] It denotes someone who knows all the textbooks on Buddhist philosophy and the sciences.

At the next level is the title 'Great Khenpo'.[201] An exceedingly brilliant scholar, he has written commentaries on some, but not necessarily all, of the sciences and receives the title 'Lion of Speech, Teacher of Boundless Textbooks', taking his place in the assembly on a huge throne.

At the very highest level, a Mahāpaṇḍita is the most exalted of scholars. This title is reserved for those who know and teach the philosophical textbooks as well as the major and minor sciences, and who have also written commentaries to the treatises of all five major and minor sciences.[202] Among those who achieved this exalted level of scholasticism are the masters Gertse Mahāpaṇḍita,[203] Zhechen Öntrül Gyurme Thubtob Namgyal,[204] Kongtrül Lodro Thaye, and Mipham Rinpoche.

The person mainly responsible for the curriculum at Śrī Siṃha Shedra was Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye. He had travelled widely in Tibet, China, and India and had visited many Buddhist universities of all schools. Mindröl Ling Monastery and Dzogchen Monastery were among the many places where he studied. Based on the vast knowledge that he had obtained through his travels and studies, Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye then developed the Dzogchen Śrī Siṃha curriculum.[205]

Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye mainly taught the 'thirteen great textbooks of Indian origin'[206] which will be explained in detail below. He had studied them mainly with

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198 bka' shog

199 rig pa'i gnas lnga bshad mkhan

200 mkhas dbang / mkhas pa'i dbang po

201 mkhan chen

202 rig pa'i gnas lnga'i bstan bcos

203 The Paṇḍita from Katog [kaḥ thog gi paṇḍita] Gertse Mahāpaṇḍita Kunkhyen Gyurme Tsewang Chogdrup [dge rtse mahā paṇḍita kun mkhyen 'gyur med tshe dbang mchog grub] (born in 1761).

204 Zhechen Öntrül Gyurme Thubtob Namgyal [zhe chen dbon sprul 'gyur med mthu stobs rnam rgyal] (1787-?) was the teacher of Kongtrül Lodro Thaye. Thubtob Namgyal also studied with khenpos from the Dzogchen Monastery.

205 mdzad rim

206 gzhung chen bcu gsum

Sengtruk Pema Trashi and taught them extensively to his students Paltrül Rinpoche[207] and Khenchen Pema Dorje, and to some extent to his young nephew, Ön Urgyen Tendzin Norbu.[208]

Khenchen Pema Dorje compiled the rules and the curriculum for the Śrī Siṃha Shedra as set forth by Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye. Paltrül Rinpoche gave the complete teachings of Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye to Ön Urgyen Tendzin Norbu. Ön Urgyen Tendzin Norbu in turn passed the complete explanation lineage he had received from Paltrül Rinpoche on to Khenpo Zhenga.[209] Khenpo Zhenga wrote the famous annotated commentaries[210] to the 'thirteen great textbooks of Indian origin' and also to the supplementary textbooks. Thereafter, the 'thirteen great textbooks' were always taught at Śrī Siṃha Shedra based on Khenpo Zhenga's annotations. Khenpo Zhenga wrote his annotations based on the explanation lineage that came down to him from the abovementioned masters. Even now, the students at Śrī Siṃha Shedra must learn all 'thirteen great textbooks' by heart.

At the Śrī Siṃha Shedra, students would, over a period of nine, thirteen, or seventeen years, study the sciences,[211] 'thirteen great textbooks of Indian origin',[212] tantra,[213] and eventually the Dzogchen teachings.[214] The aim of the Śrī Siṃha Shedra has been to produce many accomplished scholar-yogins, i.e., qualified teachers trained equally in Buddhist scholasticism and meditation.[215]

The entire study program at the shedra is divided into three sections. The first section takes nine years to complete and focuses mainly on the 'thirteen great textbooks of Indian origin' and the Guhyagarbha Tantra. The second section takes four years to complete and deals mainly with tantra and the writings of Rongzom Mahāpaṇḍita and Longchen Rabjam. The third section takes another four years to complete and concentrates on the study of Atiyoga.

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207 Paltrül Rinpoche had also received teachings from Sengtruk Pema Trashi.

208 Ön Urgyen Tendzin Norbu [dbon u rgyan bstan 'dzin nor bu], also known as Urgyen Tenga [u rgyan bstan dga'], was a cousin [tsha bo] of Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye. He studied with Paltrül Rinpoche and also with Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye.

209 rgya bskung mkhan po gzhan dga'

210 mchan 'grel

211 rig gnas

212 gzhung chen bcu gsum

213 rgyud

214 rdzogs chen

215 mkhas sgrub gnyis

During the first section of nine years,[216] the first two years[217] are mainly dedicated to the study of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra[218] and the vinaya;[219] the second two years to the study of madhyamaka[220] and cittamātra;[221] the next three years to the study of prajñāparamitā[222] and abhidharma;[223] and the last two years to the study of the Mañjuśri-nāma-saṃgīti[224] and the Guhyagarbha Tantra.[225] During this first nine-year period, students also study the writings of Sakya Paṇḍita,[226] Gorampa Sönam

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216 Every day one student must recapitulate the previous day's lesson before the entire class. Each student must roll up a piece of paper with his name written on it, and the khenpo will choose a student by drawing a name card. This procedure is called 'drawing the name cards' [rtags dril 'phen]. Advanced students who have joined the science classes have to write a daily synopsis based on the textbooks and oral teachings [dpe brjod bris]. Through this the teacher can check the students' understanding and writing skills. A final written examination [yid tshad / yig rgyugs] is held after the first section of nine years.

217 During the course of the first two years, students also received commentaries on the dkon mchog rjes dran mdo, rgyal sras lag len, and sdom gsum. To receive a commentary on the dkon mchog rjes dran mdo is considered to be a very auspicious beginning [rten 'brel] for any new student.

218 spyod 'jug

219 Among the 'thirteen great textbooks', this refers to the Prātimokṣa-sūtra [so sor thar pa'i mdo] and the Vinaya-sūtra ['dul ba mdo rtsa ba].

220 Among the 'thirteen great textbooks', the madhyamaka [dbu ma] textbooks refer to the Prajñā-nāma-mūla-madhyamaka-kārika [dbu ma rtsa ba shes rab], the Madhyamakāvatāra [dbu ma la 'jug pa], and the Catuḥśataka-śāstra-kārikā-nāma [bstan bcos bzhi brgya pa]. Together with the madhyamaka textbooks the students also study logic [tshad ma].

221 Among the 'thirteen great textbooks', the cittamātra [sems tsam pa] refers to the Sūtrālaṃkāra [mdo sde rgyan]. After this text, the students study the Madhyānta-vibhaṇga (kārikā) [dbus mtha' rnam 'byed].

222 Among the 'thirteen great textbooks', the prajñāparamitā refers to the Abhisamayālaṃkāra [mngon rtogs rgyan]. This text condenses the entire meaning of the extensive, medium and short prajñāparamitā-sūtras. It is said that merely reciting the Abhisamayālaṃkāra carries the same merit as reciting all the extensive, medium and short prajñāparamitā-sūtras. After this text the students study the Dharma-dharmatā-vibhaṇga-kārikā [chos dang chos nyid rnam par 'byed] and the Uttara-tantra [rgyud bla ma].

223 Among the 'thirteen great textbooks', the abhidharma refers to the Abhidharma-koṣa-kārikā [chos mngon pa'i mdzod] and the Abhidharma-samuccaya [chos mngon pa kun las btus pa].

224 'jam dpal mtshan brjod

225 rgyud gsang ba snying po

226 For biographical notes on Sakya Paṇḍita Kunga Gyaltshen [sa skya paṇḍita kun dga' rgyal mtshan] (1182-1251) see *mkhas btsun bzang po Vol. X*, 137ff; *Luminous Lifes*, pages 159-169.

Senge,[227] the 7th Karmapa, Chötrak Gyamtso,[228] and Tsongkhapa Lobzang Drakpa.[229]

The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is part of the curriculum and is taught during the first two years for a period of three months based on Khenpo Zhenga's annotation commentary.[230] After completion of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra teachings, the student receives the bodhisattva vows and a bodhisattva name. Thus, he is officially made a bodhisattva. Khenpo Kunpal's commentary is also taught during the first two years for a period of six months, not as part of the Śrī Siṃha Shedra curriculum but in a separate optional class. In addition to this, the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is taught every year for a period of three months at the annual Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra Seminar.[231]

Of utmost importance to the entire curriculum is the study of the 'thirteen great textbooks of Indian origin'.[232] Through studying the 'thirteen great textbooks', the students master the key knowledge of the entire tripiṭaka. A short mnemonic poem from the Śrī Siṃha Shedra shows how the 'thirteen great textbooks' represent the entire tripiṭaka:[233]

> The Prātimokṣa[234] and Vinaya-sūtra[235] represent the vinaya piṭaka.
> The Mūla,[236] the Avatāra,[237] the Catuḥ,[238] and the Carya[239] belong to the profound Madhyamaka group, and

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[227] go ram pa bsod nams seng ge (1429-1489).

[228] chos grags rgya mtsho (1454-1506).

[229] For biographical information on Lord Tsongkhapa Lobzang Drakpa [rje tsong kha pa blo bzang grags pa] (1357-1419) see *Leben des Tsongkhapa* and *Life of Tsong Khapa*.

[230]

[231] spyod 'jug tshogs pa / spyod 'jug mchod pa / spyod rgan ma

[232] gzhung chen bcu gsum: 1) Prātimokṣa-sūtra [so sor thar pa'i mdo], 2) Vinaya-sūtra ['dul ba mdo rtsa ba], 3) Prajñā-madhyamaka-mūla [dbu ma rtsa ba shes rab], 4) Madhyamakāvatāra [dbu ma la 'jug pa], 5) Catuḥśataka-śāstra [bstan bcos bzhi brgya pa / dbu ma bzhi brgya pa], 6) Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra [spyod 'jug], 7) Sūtrālaṃkāra [mdo sde rgyan], 8) Abhisamayālaṃkāra [mngon rtogs rgyan], 9) Madhyānta-vibhaṇga [dbus mtha' rnam 'byed], 10) Dharma-dharmatā-vibhaṇga [chos dang chos nyid rnam 'byed], 11) Uttara-tantra [rgyud bla ma], 12) Abhidharma-koṣa [chos mngon pa'i mdzod], and 13) Abhidharma-samuccaya [chos mngon pa kun las btus pa]. See *The Thirteen Great Treatises.*

[233] Tripiṭaka, the three baskets [sde snod gsum]: 1) vinaya piṭaka, the basket of monastic discipline ['dul ba'i sde snod], 2) sūtra piṭaka, the basket of discourses [mdo sde'i sde snod], and 3) abhidharma piṭaka, the basket of higher dharma [mngon pa'i sde snod].

[234] Prātimokṣa-sūtra [so sor thar pa'i mdo]

[235] Vinaya-sūtra ['dul ba mdo rtsa ba]

[236] Prajñā-madhyamaka-mūla [dbu ma rtsa ba shes rab]. Supplementary textbooks [yan lag] for the Prajñā-nāma-mūla study are the so-called 'Six textbooks in the Collection of Reasoning concerning Madhyamaka' [dbu ma rigs tshogs drug] written by Nāgārjuna: 1) Prajñā-nāma-mūla-madhyamaka-kārikā [dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab], 2) Vigraha-

> Together with the five teachings of Maitreya[240] they represent the sūtra piṭaka.
> The Koṣa[241] and the Samuccaya[242] represent the abhidharma piṭaka.
> These are the 'thirteen great textbooks' of the tripiṭaka.[243]

The second section of four years is dedicated to studying the writings of Rongzom Mahāpaṇḍita[244] and the Seven Treasures of Longchenpa.[245] In addition, Jigme Lingpa's Yönten Dzö based on the commentary by Khenpo Yönga[246] and the commentary on the Three Vows[247] by Minling Lochen Dharmaśrī are also taught.

The third section of four years focuses on the study of the Seventeen Dzogchen Tantras,[248] Nyingthig Yabzhi,[249] and the Tri Yeshe Lama[250] by Jigme Lingpa.

The study of the other sciences such as Arts, Medicine, Astrology, and Linguistics are optional to the above curriculum. Upon completion of all the abovementioned courses, the students must take examinations in teaching, writing, and debate.

Due to the length, intensity, and complexity of this educational background, scholars often tend to be overburdened by the weight of all they know, feeling compelled to load as much doctrinal information as they can into their written commentaries on Buddhist treatises, and whenever possible they will insert extraneous references to the

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vyāvartanī-kārikā-nāma [rtsod pa bzlog pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa], 3) Śūnyatāsaptati-kārikā-nāma [stong pa nyid bdun cu pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa], 4) Yuktiṣaṣṭikā-kārikā-nāma [rigs pa drug cu pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa], 5) Vaidalya-sūtra-nāma [zhib mo rnam par 'thag pa zhes bya ba'i mdo], and 6) Rāja-parikathā-ratnāvali [rgyal po la gtam bya ba rin po che'i phreng ba].

237 Madhyamakāvatāra [dbu ma la 'jug pa]

238 Catuḥśataka-śāstra [bstan bcos bzhi brgya pa]

239 Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra [spyod 'jug]

240 byams chos sde lnga: 1) Sūtrālaṃkāra [mdo sde rgyan], 2) Abhisamayālaṃkāra [mngon rtogs rgyan], 3) Madhyānta-vibhaṇga [dbus mtha' rnam 'byed], 4) Dharma-dharmatā-vibhaṇga [chos dang chos nyid rnam 'byed], and 5) Uttara-tantra [rgyud bla ma].

241 Abhidharma-koṣa [chos mngon pa'i mdzod]

242 Abhidharma-samuccaya [chos mngon pa kun las btus pa]

243 mdo dang mdo rtsa 'dul ba'i sde snod dang / rtsa 'jug bzhi spyod zab mo dbu ma'i tshogs / byams chos sde lnga mdo sde'i sde snod dang / mdzod dang kun btus mngon pa'i sde snod te / sde snod gsum gyi gzhung chen bcu gsum lags /

244 rong zom bka' 'bum

245 klong chen mdzod bdun

246 Khenpo Yönga [mkhan po yon dga' / mkhan po yon tan rgya mtsho]. He studied with Paltrül Rinpoche and with Ön Urgyen Tendzin Norbu.

247 *sdom gsum dpag bsam snye ma*

248 rgyud bcu bdun

249 snying thig ya bzhi

250 khrid ye shes bla ma

sciences they have studied, such as medicine, astrology, etc. In addition, their scholastic explanations must be supported by quotations from scriptures. For the uninformed or inexperienced reader, these explanations and quotations are usually so technical and ponderous as to require further explanatory commentary from a scholarly teacher. Thus, in the lineage teachings of Buddhism there tends to be a high level of inaccessibility dispelled only by the skilled personal teacher.

Paltrül Rinpoche and the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra

In the history of Buddhism in Eastern Tibet, Paltrül Rinpoche Orgyen Jigme Chökyi Wangpo was the greatest figure in the propagation of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. He dedicated his life to the dissemination of this teaching. Paltrül Rinpoche was one of the most illustrious spiritual teachers and authors of his time. He lived the life of an enlightened vagabond yogin, spending most of his time wandering through remote areas of East Tibet, living in caves and hermitages. The core of his practice was Dzogchen, the Great Perfection, infused with loving kindness, compassion, and bodhicitta.[251]

Paltrül Rinpoche studied with the greatest teachers of his era and was a scholar of the highest magnitude. He possessed not the slightest interest in fame or reputation but was one of the greatest meditation masters of the Dzogchen tradition, one who counted many great teachers among his students. He never remained very long at one place and would never accept offerings or gifts in return for his teachings.

A major lineage holder of Jigme Lingpa's Longchen Nyingthig tradition,[252] Paltrül Rinpoche set a very high standard among Buddhist practitioners. His entire life was dedicated to the genuine study and practice lineage of Buddhism. Although he taught at various monasteries, shedras, and hermitages throughout his life, he owned nothing, neither monastic nor worldly goods. He always remained a care-free yogin who might at any time wander off unaccompanied, his only possessions being the few books that he carried with him.

From time to time Paltrül Rinpoche would write profound treatises, commentaries, and poetry, bequeathing us six volumes of writings. Followers of all schools were his students, and together with Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo, Chokgyur Lingpa,[253]

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251 At all times Patrül Rinpoche held loving kindness, compassion, and bodhicitta as the very root of spiritual practice. To everyone, high and low, he would say, "Have a good heart, act with kindness; nothing is more important than that." Quoted from *Enlightened Vagabond.*

252 From his root guru Jigme Gyalwe Nyugu ['jigs med rgyal ba'i myu gu] (1765-1843), a direct student of Jigme Lingpa (1730-1798), Paltrül Rinpoche received the entire teachings of the Longchen Nyingthig tradition.

253 For biographical notes on the great treasure revealer Chokgyur Lingpa Dechen Zhigpo Lingpa [gter chen mchog gyur bde chen zhig po gling pa] (1829-1879 / 1870??) see *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, pages 841-848; *mchog gling rnam thar 1-3*; and *Life of Terchen Chokgyur Lingpa*.

Kongtrül Lodro Thaye, Mipham Rinpoche, and other great masters, he spearheaded the non-sectarian movement,[254] the great revival of Tibetan Buddhism originating in East Tibet.

Paltrül Rinpoche himself had studied sūtra and tantra under Gyalwe Nyugu,[255] Jigme Kalzang,[256] Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye,[257] Jigme Ngotshar,[258] Zhechen Öntrül Thubtob Namgyal,[259] Khenpo Sengtruk Pema Trashi,[260] and the fourth Dzogchen Rinpoche Mingyur Namkhai Dorje.[261] He studied the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra primarily with Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye and Jigme Ngotshar, and through their teachings Paltrül Rinpoche became a great scholar himself. In addition, Paltrül Rinpoche received teachings on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra from many other teachers.

Paltrül Rinpoche is said to have taught the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra about one hundred times[262] during his life. Interestingly, although Paltrül Rinpoche in his time was regarded as 'the authority' on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, he never wrote a commentary on it. However, he did teach it to many great masters of all schools, always in accordance with their own traditions. Thus, he was a truly non-sectarian teacher. His close student Khenpo Kunpal writes:[263]

> In fact, my kind teacher (Paltrül Rinpoche) had realized all teachings without any contradictions and all texts appeared to him as instructions. Therefore, he became a lineage holder for the teachings of the Early and Later (Translation Periods).
>
> On this basis, when asked, "How should this text (the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra) be explained?", I (Khenpo Kunpal) heard him say, "It should

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254 ris med

255 Gyalwe Nyugu [rgyal ba'i smyu gu] (1765-1843) was Paltrül Rinpoche's main root guru and the teacher from whom he received the teachings of the Longchen Nyingthig tradition. See *Masters of Meditation*, pages 163-173.

256 Jigme Kalzang ['jigs med skal bzang] see *Masters of Meditation*, pages 173-174.

257 See *dpal sprul rnam thar*, folio 9b4-5.

258 Jigme Ngotshar ['jigs med ngo mtshar] was a direct student of Jigme Lingpa (1730-1798) as well as a student of Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye. Also known as Dola Jigme, Jigme Ngotshar is one of the famous 'four fearless disciples' ['jigs med rnam bzhi] of Jigme Lingpa.

259 zhe chen dbon sprul mthu stobs rnam rgyal

260 mkhan po seng phrug pad ma bkra shis, see *dpal sprul rnam thar*, folio 11b3.

261 rdzogs chen sku phreng bzhi pa mi 'gyur nam mkha'i rdo rje, see *dpal sprul rnam thar*, folio 11b2.

262 Khenpo Kunpal reports miraculous events each time Paltrül Rinpoche taught the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, *dpal sprul rnam thar*, folio 14b6-15a1: "Whenever he taught the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, numerous large yellow flowers appeared which had never before grown in that area. These (flowers) came to be known as 'the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra flowers' [spyod 'jug me tog]."

263 text section 137-138

> be explained to the followers of the Sakya School according to the commentary of the venerable Sönam Tsemo;[264] to the followers of the Genden School[265] with the commentary of Darma (Rinchen);[266] to the followers of the Kagyü School with commentaries such as that of Pawo Tsuglak Trengwa and others;[267] and to the followers of the Old School—and (in particular) for the Śrī Siṃha (Shedra) of the ancient Dzogchen (monastery)—according to their own tradition of the Old School."[268]

Khenpo Kunpal, who served as Paltrül Rinpoche's attendant during his later years, writes that Paltrül Rinpoche carried a copy of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra[269] and the Mañjuśrī-nāma-saṇgīti at all times, these texts being his daily prayers. But even these he would sometimes give away, as he knew them by heart.[270] Since Paltrül Rinpoche dedicated so much of his time to teaching the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, his followers regarded him as an emanation of Śāntideva.[271]

Together with his two teachers, Sengtruk Pema Trashi[272] and Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye, Paltrül Rinpoche inaugurated the tradition of an annual three-month intensive study and practice period on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra at 'Saṃgha Garden Enclosure' next to the Dzogchen Monastery, lasting from April until June each year. The monks from the monastery, the shedra, and their environs would all gather and arrange extensive offerings. They would recite the entire Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, chapter by chapter, throughout the day. At the proper places they would insert extensive offerings, prostrations, prayers, confessions, and so forth, thus turning the

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264 See *bsod nams rtse mo 'grel pa* written by the great Sakyapa master Sonam Tsemo [bsod nams rtse mo] (1142-1182).

265 The Genden School [dge ldan pa] refers to the Gelukpa School [dge lugs pa].

266 See *dar ṭik* written by Gyaltsab Dharma Rinchen [rgyal tshab dharma rin chen] (1362-1432).

267 See *gtsug lag 'grel chen* written in 1565 by Pawo Tsuglak Trengwa [dpa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba] (1504-1566).

268 See also a similar explanation of his teaching style of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra in *dpal sprul rnam thar*, page 17a1-5.

269 Paltrül Rinpoche said that he himself has read the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra more than a thousand times and still gained new insight each time he read or recited the text.

270 See *Masters of Meditation*, pages 208-209.

271 See *dpal sprul rnam thar*, folio 6b1: "In the noble land he was Śāntideva and the Mahāsiddha Śavaripa" ['phags pa'i yul du zhi ba lha dang grub chen sha ba ri]. See also *dpal sprul rnam thar*, 6b3-4: "Among the emanations of Jigme Lingpa, Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo was known as the body emanation, Paltrül Rinpoche as the speech emanation, and Do Khyentse Yeshe Dorje as the mind emanation" ['jigs med gling pa'i rnam 'phrul / sku yi sprul pa 'jam dbyangs mkhyen brtse'i dbang po / gsung gi sprul pa dpal sprul rin po che / thugs kyi sprul pa mkhyen brtse ye shes rdo rje yin par grags pa].

272 Sengtruk Pema Trashi [seng phrug pad ma bkra shis] was the first khenpo at Śrī Siṃha Shedra and the teacher of Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye [rgyal sras gzhan phan mtha' yas].

entire text into a vast liturgy. A khenpo would explain the text and everyone would meditate on it according to the oral instructions of the lineage.

This annual Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra seminar was called the 'Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra Ritual'.[273] All the teachings on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra given during the seminar focused on practicing the teachings and were not overly academic in nature. The teachers would in most cases give a commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra proper, on Khenpo Zhenga's annotation commentary, and occasionally would teach the commentary by Ngülchu Thogme Zangpo.[274]

Students at Dzogchen Monastery to this day must learn the entire Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra by heart. They are asked to stand up in class and recite the entire text in front of the khenpos and their fellow students. The absolute minimum requirement is that they memorize a selection of the text, known as the 'four chapters of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra'.[275] These four chapters are the first, second, third, and tenth.

For most of the latter part of his life, Paltrül Rinpoche lived at Dzagön, the seat of his root-teacher, Gyalwe Nyugu. Paltrül Rinpoche also established an annual three-month seminar on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra at Dzagön,[276] similar to the annual teaching seminar at Dzogchen.[277]

Before Paltrül Rinpoche's time, the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra was known and studied only in a few great monastic universities in East Tibet; at times even obtaining a copy of the text could prove difficult.[278] Due to Paltrül Rinpoche's tireless efforts, the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is now widely taught in the monastic universities of Eastern Tibet. His inspiring teaching style led every small monk from the age of ten onwards to learn to recite this text by heart. In addition, he taught the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra many times to great gatherings of lay people, thus making the complete Mahāyāna path accessible to large, not simply monastic, audiences.

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273 spyod 'jug tshogs pa / spyod 'jug cho ga / spyod 'jug mchod pa / spyod rgan ma.

274 dngul chu thogs med bzang po. See *dngul chu thogs med 'grel pa.*

275 spyod 'jug le'u bzhi ma.

276 See *dpal sprul rnam thar*, folio 16b4-5: rdza dgon du lo rer spyod 'jug zla khrid gsum re dang.

277 See Masters of Meditation, page 205.

278 See *dpal sprul rnam thar*, folio 23a1-4, as translated in *Enlightened Vagabond:* "Formerly, except in large monastic communities, one could hardly find anyone who owned a copy of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra or of any other similar scripture, let alone understanding even their titles. Owing to the very kindness of Paltrül Rinpoche, the whole area became filled with people who would teach or listen to the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra [spyod 'jug], the Five Dharmas of Maitreya [byams chos sde lnga], the Three Sets of Vows [sdom gsum], the Yönten Dzö [yon tan mdzod], and other scriptures. Down to ten-year old monks, many people were able to recite and even teach the whole Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. Countless religious and lay people fully understood that to have a good heart and develop bodhicitta was the very root of the Buddha's Doctrine." Khenpo Chöga comments on this passage: "One must exclude the Sakya and Gelukpa Schools from this strong statement by Khenpo Kunpal, since they always maintained an explanation lineage of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra."

Among the students who received his teachings on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra were great masters such as Ön Urgyen Tendzin Norbu,[279] the Third Dodrupchen, Jigme Tenpai Nyima,[280] Lungtok Tenpai Nyima,[281] Thubten Chökyi Drakpa,[282] Khenpo Kunpal,[283] Khenpo Yönga,[284] Mipham Rinpoche,[285] and many others.

Khenpo Kunpal's Commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra

Khenpo Kunpal studied with Paltrül Rinpoche for many years and received extensive teachings from him. He was also a student of Ön Urgyen Tendzin Norbu and studied for many years at the Śrī Siṃha Shedra. Khenpo Kunpal wrote the commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra that we translate in this work and the volumes to follow. Concerning this commentary, Khenpo Kunpal mentions one important occasion, the time when Paltrül Rinpoche taught the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra to the great treasure-revealer, Chokgyur Dechen Lingpa, at Dzogchen Monastery:[286]

> In particular, he taught this text (the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra) for six months to students such as myself (Khenpo Kunpal), to masters such as Chokgyur Lingpa,[287] who is mentioned in the prophecies, to his sublime lineage children, and others. At that time, mainly using the commentary of Ngülchu Thogme, he taught this text as an instruction for practice.

At that time, Khenpo Kunpal took detailed notes of Paltrül Rinpoche's teachings. A hand-written manuscript of these notes was brought out of Tibet by Dilgo Khyentse

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[279] Ön Urgyen Tendzin Norbu [dbon u rgyan bstan 'dzin nor bu], also known as Urgyen Tenga [u rgyan bstan dga'], was a cousin [tsha bo] of Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye. He studied with Paltrül Rinpoche and also with Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye.

[280] 'jigs med bstan pa'i nyi ma (1865-1926).

[281] lung rtogs bstan pa'i nyi ma (1829-1901).

[282] Thubten Chökyi Drakpa [thub bstan chos kyi grags pa], also known as Minyag Kunzang Sönam [mi nyag kun bzang bsod nams], Paltrül Rinpoche's foremost student of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, stayed a long time with Paltrül Rinpoche and wrote down his oral teachings [zhal rgyun]. He wrote three famous commentaries on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. Paltrül Rinpoche himself said: "Minyag Kunzang is more learned about the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra than myself [spyod 'jug rang las mkhas pa mi nyag kun bzang]. Loter Wangpo is more learned about the abhidharma than myself [mngon pa rang las mkhas pa lo gter dbang po]. Tendzin Trakpa is more learned about pramāṇa than myself [tshad ma rang las mkhas pa bstan 'dzin grags pa]. And Urgyen Tendzin Norbu is more learned about the vinaya than myself ['dul ba rang las mkhas pa u rgyan bstan 'dzin nor bu]."

[283] Khenpo Kunpal or Khenpo Kunzang Palden [mkhan po kun bzang dpal ldan].

[284] Khenpo Yönga [mkhan po yon dga' / mkhan po yon tan rgya mtsho]. He studied with Paltrül Rinpoche and with Ön Urgyen Tendzin Norbu.

[285] Mipham Rinpoche [mi pham rin po che] (1846-1912).

[286] This is quoted from text section 135 of Khenpo Kunpal's commentary.

[287] See foot-note 230.

Rinpoche (1910-1991) and recently printed by Tarthang Tulku in the U.S.A.[288] Later, Khenpo Kunpal received further teachings on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra from other great students of Paltrül Rinpoche, such as Ön Urgyen Tendzin Norbu and others. From Ön Urgyen Tendzin Norbu he twice received forty-day long teachings on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra.[289]

Khenpo Kunpal wrote his own commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. He called it, "A Word-by-Word Commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, called *Drops of Nectar*, according to the Personal Statement of the Mañjughoṣa-like Teacher."[290] He wrote it using his own notes,[291] the notes of other students of Paltrül Rinpoche, the various teachings he had received from the abovementioned masters, two short texts written by Paltrül Rinpoche,[292] and the Indian and Tibetan commentaries available to him.

Concerning the style of the commentary, Khenpo Kunpal himself writes in the introduction,[293]

> I principally relied on my notes,[294] which guaranteed that everything he (Paltrül Rinpoche) taught remained in my mind, along with other (sources), in a chronological manner. For what I will explain here, scholastic elaborations such as quotations will be unnecessary, and I am fearful of (using too many) words. I have in mind something practical, a mere word-by-word commentary for beginners, easy to practice and understand. Therefore, I will not pursue (detailed) elaborations.

Khenpo Kunpal wrote his commentary as a guide for practitioners, people who train themselves in bodhicitta and the six transcendental perfections, and those who aspire to traverse the Mahāyāna path toward enlightenment. It is a particular feature of Paltrül Rinpoche's teaching style that he shows how to apply the main points of practice[295] from the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra and the way in which the transformation

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288 See *dpal sprul zhal rgyun.*

289 See *kun dpal 'grel pa* (si khron mi rigs edition) page 815.

290 byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i tshig 'grel 'jam dbyangs bla ma'i zhal lung bdud rtsi'i thig pa, here refered to as *kun dpal 'grel pa*. Khenpo Kunpal wrote this commentary at Paltrül Rinpoche's residence, the dharma camp of Gegong [dge gong chos sgar], requested by Kathok Situ Chökyi Gyatso [kaḥ thog situ chos kyi rgya mtsho] (1880-1925), Gyurme Thegchok Shedrub Gyaltsen ['gyur med theg mchog bshad sgrub rgyal mtshan], who was a tulku from Yilung Tsashül monastery [yid lhung rtsa shul dgon], and Zhechen Gyaltsab Gyurme Pema Namgyal (1871-1926). See *kun dpal 'grel pa (si khron mi rigs edition)*, pages 813-815.

291 See dpal sprul zhal rgyun

292 See spyod 'jug sgom rim and spyod 'jug sa bcad.

293 See text section 135-136.

294 See *dpal sprul zhal rgyun*.

295 bka' gnas

from an ordinary being into a bodhisattva can be achieved by anyone who seriously applies the teaching.

Thus, Khenpo Kunpal has ensured that Paltrül Rinpoche's direct teaching lineage is available to us in these times. The text he composed was first printed at Zhechen monastery in East Tibet and later reprinted a few times in Tibet, Nepal, and the U.S.A.[296] Very soon after its publication in Tibet, this commentary became known to many lamas, scholars, monks, and practitioners of all schools of Tibetan Buddhism.

Three further authors whose commentaries on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra also represent Paltrül Rinpoche's direct teachings are Khenpo Zhenga, Thubten Chökyi Drakpa, and Mipham Rinpoche. Based on Paltrül Rinpoche's oral teachings, Khenpo Zhenga[297] wrote his famous annotation commentaries[298] on all thirteen great textbooks, including the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, which are still taught at Śrī Siṃha Shedra as well as many other shedras in Tibet, India, and the Himalayan countries.

Thubten Chökyi Drakpa[299] was originally a follower of the Gelukpa school. He studied for more than twenty years with Paltrül Rinpoche and wrote three commentaries on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. One was an extensive commentary on the first eight chapters and the other two were commentaries on the ninth chapter.[300]

Mipham Rinpoche received teachings on the knowledge chapter from Paltrül Rinpoche and based on that in 1878 wrote his famous commentary, *nor bu ke ta ka*, regarded as the authoritative commentary representing Paltrül Rinpoche's oral explanation lineage. When Paltrül Rinpoche later read the *nor bu ke ta ka*, he remarked, "Strange, it is written in the style that I used when I taught at Śrī Siṃha Shedra."[301]

Although Paltrül Rinpoche never wrote a commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, he did write a brief meditation guide[302] for the entire text, teaching the key points of practice. Khenpo Kunpal incorporated this into his commentary. Paltrül Rinpoche also wrote a lineage supplication to the lineage masters of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra[303] which will be discussed later.

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[296] See kun dpal 'grel pa (zhe chen edition); kun dpal 'grel pa (si khron mi rigs edition); kun dpal 'grel pa (Yeshe De edition); and kun dpal 'grel pa (sangs rgyas bstan 'dzin edition).

[297] Khenpo Zhenga or Zhenphen Chökyi Nangwa [gzhan phan chos kyi snang ba] (1871-1927).

[298] See gzhan dga' mchan 'grel.

[299] thub bstan chos kyi grags pa, also known as mi nyag kun bzang bsod nams, was born in the 19th century.

[300] See mi nyag kun bzang 'grel chen, mi nyag kun bzang sher 'grel 1 and *mi nyag kun bzang sher 'grel 2*. An English translation of *mi nyag kun bzang sher 'grel 1* has been made by the Padmakara Translation Group, see *Two Buddhist Commentaries*.

[301] From Enlightened Vagabond, op cit.

[302] spyod 'jug bsgom rim

[303] spyod 'jug brgyud 'debs

Structure of Khenpo Kunpal's Commentary

Paltrül Rinpoche taught the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra by structuring the entire text according to the following four lines, attributed by some scholars to Nāgārjuna:[304]

> May the precious and supreme bodhicitta
> Arise in those in whom it has not yet arisen;
> And where it has arisen may it not decrease
> But ever increase more and more.

> byang chub sems mchog rin po che
> ma skyes pa rnams skye gyur cig
> skyes pa nyams pa med pa yang
> gong nas gong du 'phel bar shog

This aspiration summarizes the entire Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra and its ten chapters in 913 stanzas. The ten chapters are structured according to four main classifications as follows:[305]

Three chapters that give rise to the precious bodhicitta in those in whom it has not yet arisen[306] (chap. 1, 2, 3):

1. Explaining the benefits of bodhicitta[307] [36 stanzas];
2. Confessing negativity[308] [65 stanzas];
3. Thorough adoption of bodhicitta[309] [33.5 stanzas].

Three chapters that prevent the decrease (of the precious bodhicitta) where it has arisen[310] (chap. 4,5,6):

4. Heedfulness[311] [48 stanzas];
5. Introspection[312] [109 stanzas];
6. Patience[313] [134 stanzas].

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304 See text sections 196-197 from Khenpo Kunpal's commentary.
305 rtsa'i sa bcad
306 byang chub kyi sems rin po che ma skyes pa bskyed par byed pa'i le'u
307 byang chub sems kyi phan yon bshad pa'i le'u
308 sdig pa bshags pa'i le'u
309 byang chub sems yongs su gzung ba
310 byang chub kyi sems rin po che skyes pa mi nyams par byed pa'i le'u gsum
311 bag yod
312 shes bzhin

Three chapters that not only prevent the decrease (of the precious bodhicitta) but cause it to ever increase more and more[314] (chap. 7,8,9):

7. Diligence[315] [76 stanzas];
8. Meditation[316] [187 stanzas];
9. Transcendental knowledge[317] [167 stanzas].

A single chapter concerning the dedication of the results that have thus been developed for the benefit of others [318] (chap. 10):

10. Dedication[319] [57.5 stanzas].

Following this format, the first three chapters deal with arousing bodhicitta; the second three chapters deal with how to sustain it and prevent it from being lost or diminished; the third three chapters deal with methods for increasing it; and the tenth chapter deals with the subject of dedication. One dedicates the merit coming from bodhicitta which one has aroused, sustained, and increased through the teachings of the previous nine chapters.

Paltrül Rinpoche wrote a short text called 'Structure of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra',[320] in which he taught a method of structuring the entire body of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. In this text he identifies the various topics and sections of the work and assigns titles to them. If one applies this framework to the verses of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, one immediately gains considerable insight into the subject matter of each respective verse. Khenpo Kunpal followed for the most part this format in structuring his commentary.

If you follow the structural chart that outlines Khenpo Kunpal's commentary, given before the translation of Śāntideva's root text and Khenpo Kunpal's commentary, you might find it easier to comprehend the structure of the text, particularly that of the first chapter.[321]

The Two Great Lineages of Mahāyāna

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313 bzod pa

314 byang chub kyi sems rin po che mi nyams par gong du spel ba'i le'u gsum

315 brtson 'grus

316 bsam gtan

317 shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa

318 de ltar spel ba'i 'bras bu gzhan don du bngo ba'i le'u gcig

319 bsngo ba

320 See spyod 'jug sa bcad

321 Vollkommenheit im BCA, pages 45-59.

Authenticity of any Buddhist teaching is established by demonstrating an unbroken master-student lineage starting with Buddha Śākyamuni and continuing down to the present day. A teaching is considered lost or no longer valid if the lineage of its transmission has been broken.

According to the Tibetan tradition, Buddha Śākyamuni himself taught the dharma through the following three promulgations as follows.[322] The first promulgation, 'the dharma wheel of the four truths',[323] corresponds to the Hīnayāna teachings. The second promulgation, 'the dharma wheel devoid of attributes',[324] and the third promulgation, 'the dharma wheel of excellent analysis',[325] constitute the Mahāyāna teachings. The Mahāyāna teachings include both sūtra[326] and mantra.[327] Yet, the Vajrayāna teachings[328] are generally considered to be the fourth promulgation, the 'promulgation of the Secret Mantra'.[329]

These promulgations should be understood in the context of the doctrine of Buddha Śākyamuni's three bodies.[330] Mahāyāna doctrine does not consider Buddha Śākyamuni as a human being as does the Hīnayāna; Buddha Śākyamuni is seen as a wisdom field. This wisdom field, the 'wisdom body of the Buddha',[331] is not bound by time and space. Western scholars view Buddhism as developing historically from Hīnayāna to Mahāyāna and finally to Vajrayāna. Tibetan Buddhist scholars on the other hand see such deterministic, chronological sequencing of Buddha's promulgations as too linear and as not in accord with the ultimate aspect of the reality that Buddha's teachings describe.

The Tibetan tradition divides the Mahāyāna teachings into two parts: the 'tradition of the profound view'[332] and the 'tradition of vast activities'.[333] The first comes through Bodhisattva Mañjughoṣa and the latter through Bodhisattva Maitreya.

According to tradition, Mañjughoṣa,[334] the main lineage holder of the second promulgation, 'the dharma wheel devoid of attributes', received teachings directly

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322 For details on the three promulgations of the wheel of dharma see *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, pages 154-155.

323 bka' dang po bden bzhi'i chos 'khor

324 bka' bar pa mtshan nyid med pa'i chos 'khor

325 bka' tha ma legs pa rnam par phye ba'i chos 'khor

326 mdo

327 sngags

328 gsang sngags rdo rje theg pa

329 gsang sngags kyi chos 'khor

330 Skr. trikāya: dharma-kāya [chos sku]; saṃbhogakāya [longs sku]; and nirmāṇakāya [sprul sku].

331 sangs rgyas kyi ye shes kyi sku

332 zab mo lta ba'i srol

333 rgya chen spyod pa'i srol

from Buddha Śākyamuni. During this second promulgation, Buddha Śākyamuni mainly taught transcendental knowledge[335] and profound emptiness[336] to Mañjughoṣa and others. Mañjughoṣa's lineage is called the 'tradition of the profound view' and was recorded by Nāgārjuna.[337]

The treatises written by Nāgārjuna which summarize this view are called the 'Six Textbooks in the Collection of Reasoning concerning Madhyamaka'. Some scholars state that these refer to five of Nāgārjuna's texts on Madhyamaka while others say six. When classified as being six, they are called the 'Six textbooks in the Collection of Reasoning concerning Madhyamaka'.[338] These six textbooks are classified as 'writings on profound emptiness';[339] since Nāgārjuna's lineage primarily teaches on profound emptiness, it is called the 'lineage of the profound view'.[340]

Maitreya, the main lineage holder of the third promulgation, 'the dharma wheel of excellent analysis', also received teachings directly from Buddha Śākyamuni. In the third promulgation, Buddha Śākyamuni explained in great detail to Bodhisattva Maitreya the subtle distinctions that can be made between emptiness[341] and wisdom[342] as well as the various distinctions of the ten bodhisattva levels and the five paths.[343] Maitreya's lineage is called the 'tradition of vast activities' and was recorded by Asaṅga.[344]

The treatises written by Asaṅga summarizing Maitreya's teachings are called the 'Five Teachings of Maitreya.'[345] Since Asaṅga's lineage primarily expounds the extensive

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334 'jam dpal dbyangs

335 shes rab gyi pha rol tu phyin pa; skr. prajñāparamitā

336 zab mo stong pa nyid

337 klu sgrub

338 'Six textbooks in the Collection of Reasoning concerning Madhyamaka' [dbu ma rigs tshogs drug] written by Nāgārjuna: 1) Prajñā-nāma-mūla-madhyamaka-kārikā [dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab], 2) Vigraha-vyāvartanī-kārikā-nāma [rtsod pa bzlog pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa], 3) Śūnyatāsaptati-kārikā-nāma [stong pa nyid bdun cu pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa], 4) Yuktiṣaṣṭikā-kārikā-nāma [rigs pa drug cu pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa], 5) Vaidalya-sūtra-nāma [zhib mo rnam par 'thag pa zhes bya ba'i mdo], and 6) Rāja-parikathā-ratnāvali [rgyal po la gtam bya ba rin po che'i phreng ba].

339 zab mo lta ba'i skor

340 zab mo lta ba'i brgyud pa / zab mo lta brgyud

341 yul stong pa nyid shes rab gyi pha rol tu phyin pa

342 yul can ye shes shes rab gyi pha rol tu phyin pa

343 sa bcu dang lam lnga

344 thogs med

345 byams chos sde lnga: 1) Sūtrālaṃkāra [mdo sde rgyan], 2) Abhisamayālaṃkāra [mngon rtogs rgyan], 3) Madhyānta-vibhaṇga [dbus mtha' rnam 'byed], 4) Dharma-dharmatā-vibhaṇga [chos dang chos nyid rnam 'byed], and 5) Uttara-tantra [rgyud bla ma].

conduct of bodhisattvas, it is called the 'lineage of vast activities'.[346] Asaṅga's five textbooks are classified as 'writings on vast activities'.[347]

The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra combines both lineages in one single practice manual. Therefore, this lineage is called the 'lineage that combines both view and practice'[348] or 'the lineage of blessing and practice'.[349] This lineage is said to have been transmitted from Buddha Śākyamuni to Bodhisattva Mañjughoṣa. It was then received and recorded by Śāntideva.[350] However, if one analyzes the manner of receiving the bodhisattva vows,[351] as will be discussed in great detail in volume three, then the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra must be classified under the 'lineage of the profound view'.

Ritual Associated with the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra

In addition to being a commonly studied text, large sections of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra are used by all schools of Tibetan Buddhism for recitation, ritual, and prayer. For example, the second and third chapters contain a great deal of source material used in Mahāyāna ritual. These two chapters extensively teach the methods used for gathering 'conceptual merit' through the 'practice in eight sections'.[352]

All schools use verses from the first, second, third, and tenth chapters for the ritual known as 'the ceremony for transmitting the development of bodhicitta',[353] also called 'receiving the bodhisattva precepts'.[354] Paltrül Rinpoche himself arranged such a text.[355] All ritual texts for transmitting bodhicitta and the bodhisattva precepts that are

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346 rgya chen spyod brgyud

347 rgya chen spyod pa'i skor

348 lta spyod zung 'jug gi brgyud pa

349 nyams len byin rlabs kyi brgyud pa

350 Khenpo Chöga comments, "Although Śāntideva had many visions of his meditation deity, Mañjuśrī, this lineage in no way implies that Śāntideva had received the teachings of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra directly from Mañjuśrī. Rather, the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is a mnemonic poem written by Śāntideva, synthesizing all the sūtras and śāstras he had studied."

351 sdom pa len tshul

352 The traditional yan lag bdun pa is enlarged into yan lag brgyad pa through adding going for refuge, as follows: 1) The section on presenting offerings [mchod pa 'bul ba'i yan lag], 2) the section on paying respect [phyag 'tshal ba'i yan lag], 3) the section on going for refuge [skyabs su 'gro ba'i yan lag], 4) the section on confessing negativities [sdig pa bshags pa'i yan lag], 5) the section of rejoicing [rjes su yi rang ba'i yan lag], 6) the section of requesting to turn the wheel of dharma [chos 'khor bar bskul ba'i yan lag], 7) the section of supplicating not to enter into nirvāṇa [mya ngan las mi 'da' bar gsol ba 'debs pa'i yan lag], and 8) the section of dedicating the merit for the benefit of others [dge rtsa gzhan don du sngo ba'i yan lag].

353 sems bksyed 'bogs chog

354 See *byang sdom blang chog*. For further discussion on the ritual of receiving the bodhisattva vows in the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra see *Ritual der Entschlussfassung.*

355 See *sems bskyed 'bogs chog* by Paltrül Rinpoche.

based on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra follow Nāgārjuna's lineage of the profound view, which accords with the tradition of Madhyamaka.[356] In Nāgārjuna's tradition the precepts for bodhicitta of aspiration and for bodhicitta of application are received together during the ceremony, while in Asaṅga's tradition, which accords with the Cittamātra tradition,[357] the precepts for both types of bodhicitta are received separately.

During the afore-mentioned yearly Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra practice seminar[358] at Dzogchen Monastery, the entire text of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is organized for ritual recitation and interspersed with various well-known Mahāyāna offerings, homages, confessions, and so forth.[359]

The Explanation Lineage of Teachers of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra through Butön

Giving evidence of an unbroken, oral explanation lineage for a treatise such as the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is of utmost importance for a teacher, since it proves his authority and the validity of his interpretation. That is why Butön lists, in the colophon of his commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra,[360] the oral explanation lineage[361] of the masters through whom the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra was handed down to him:

> When this Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, composed by the great master Śāntideva, who practiced one-pointedly the conduct of a bodhisattva, was spoken as a recitation, those who had achieved perfect recall and who were present in his entourage at that time successively handed down the direct oral explanation lineage through Jetāri,[362] Candrakīrti the lesser,[363] Kunayaśrī,[364] the Nepalese Kanakaśrī,[365] Sumatikīrti,[366] Ngok Loden

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[356] dbu ma'i lugs

[357] sems tsam lugs

[358] spyod 'jug tshogs pa / spyod rgan ma

[359] This ritual arrangement according to Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye and Paltrül Rinpoche has been printed at Dzogchen Monastery but was not available to the author. A similar text according to Paltrül Rinpoche's tradition as maintained at the Kyangma hermitage was recently published by Khenpo Thubten in India. See *mthong ba brgyud pa'i phyag srol*.

[360] See *bu ston 'grel chen*, pages 600-602. This colophon has been discussed and analysed by Akira Saito in *Bu ston and the sPyod 'jug*, pages 79-85.

[361] man ngag gi legs bshad brgyud pa

[362] dze ta ri

[363] zla grags chung ba

[364] ku na ya śrī

[365] bal po ka na ka śrī

[366] su ma ti kirti

Sherab,[367] Khyung Rinchen Trak,[368] Tölung Gyamar,[369] and Chawa Chö Seng[370] (1109-1169).

It is said that Chawa Chö Seng also received it from Trolungpa.[371] (From Chawa Chö Seng the lineage continues with) Tsangkar[372] to Trophu Lotsawa Jampe Pal[373] (1172-1225).

Again, Trophu Lotsawa Jampe Pal received the explanation from the three: Khache Panchen Śākyaśrī,[374] Paṇḍita Buddhaśrījñāna,[375] and the Nepalese Paṇḍita Devaśrī.[376]

(Trophu Lotsawa Jampe Pal gave it) to both Lama Sönam Gyalwa[377] and Khenpo Zhönu Dorje[378] (1207-1263). I (Butön) received it from my great teacher Tseme Kyebu.[379]

The Lineage of Teachers of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra in the Lam Rim Tradition

In 1787, the great Gelukpa author Tsechok Ling Yongdzin Yeshe Gyaltsen (1713-1793) compiled two volumes with the biographies[380] of all the lineage masters of the Lam Rim tradition, the 'graded stages to enlightenment'.[381] The tradition of the graded stages to enlightenment describes the development of bodhicitta and the application of the six transcendental perfections, the entire sūtra Mahāyāna path to enlightenment. The graded stages tradition is the most essential teaching of the Gelukpa School that arose out of the Old Kadampa School[382] as founded by the Indian master Atiśa.[383]

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367 rngog blo ldan shes rab

368 khyung rin chen grags

369 stod lung rgya dmar

370 phyva ba chos seng / phyva ba chos kyi seng ge

371 gro lung pa

372 gtsang dkar

373 Trophu Lotsawa Jampe Pal [khro phu lo tsā ba byams pa'i dpal] was a direct student of Tsangkarpa [gtsang dkar pa].

374 kha che paṇ chen śākya śrī

375 paṇḍita buddha śri jñāna

376 bal po'i paṇḍita deva śrī

377 bla ma bsod nams rgyal ba

378 mkhan po gzhon nu rdo rje

379 tshad ma'i skyes bu

380 See lam rim bla brgyud

381 byang chub lam gyi rim pa

382 Gene Smith mentions in *Among Tibetan Texts*, page 228, that the early Kadampa masters included the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra among the 'six basic texts of the Kadampa School' [bka' gdams gzhung drug], which are: 1) the Sūtrālaṃkāra [mdo sde rgyan] of Maitreya, 2) the

Atiśa received the complete teachings and instructions on the graded stages to enlightenment through three lineages:[384] the two afore-mentioned great lineages, i.e., the 'lineage of the profound view' and the 'lineage of vast activities', as well as the 'practice lineage of great blessings'.

The 'practice lineage of great blessings' is said to begin with the Bodhisattva Mañjughoṣa and was recorded by Śāntideva in his texts the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, the Śikṣā-samuccaya, and, according to the Tibetan view, the Sūtra-samuccaya. The 'practice lineage of great blessings' is said to run through Mañjughoṣa, Akṣayamati,[385] master Eladhari,[386] master Śuravajra,[387] the Mahā Śrī Ratna Bodhisattva,[388] Atiśa's root guru Lord (Dharmakīrti of) Suvarṇadvīpa,[389] and Atiśa. From Atiśa the lineage runs in an unbroken succession of masters through the Old and New Kadampa schools[390] up to the present day.

Terdag Lingpa's reading transmission of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra

Terdag Lingpa Gyurme Dorje's 'manual of received teachings'[391] provides us with another lineage of the reading transmission[392] of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra[393] and

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Bodhisattva-bhūmi [byang chub sems dpa'i sa] of Asaṅga, 3) the Śikṣā-samuccaya [bslab btus] of Śāntideva, 4) the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra [spyod 'jug] of Śāntideva, 5) the Jātakamālā [skyes pa'i rabs kyi rgyud] of Āryaśūra, and 6) the Udāna-varga [ched du brjod pa'i tshoms].

383 Dīpaṃkaraśrī [dpal mar me mdzad] or Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna [dpal mar med mdzad ye shes] or Jobo Je Palden Atiśa [jo bo rje dpal ldan a ti śa] are names of Atiśa (982-1054).

384 See lam rim bla brgyud, page 290.

385 blo gros mi zad pa, an epithet for Śāntideva.

386 slob dpon e la dha ri (ti)

387 slob dpon dpa' bo rdo rje

388 byang chub sems dpa' chen po rin chen dpal

389 mgon po gser gling pa

390 The Old Kadampa School [bka' gdams rnying ma] began with Atiśa and the New Kadampa School [bka' gdams gsar pa] with Tsongkhapa. The New Kadampa school is also called the Gendenpa [dge ldan pa] or Gelukpa School. The Old Kadampa School has again two lineages: the lineage of textbooks of the Kadampas [bka' gdams gzhung pa], *lam rim bla brgyud*, pages 475-576; and the lineage of oral instructions of the Kadampas [bka' gdams gdams ngag pa], *lam rim bla brgyud*, 576-end. There is also the lineage of upadeśa of Kadampa [bka' gdams man ngag pa], which is sometimes given as the third lineage.

391 *thob yig*, pages 20-21.

392 Reading transmission [lung]: From the earliest periods of instruction in Buddhism, teachings were transmitted orally from teacher to student. When the teachings were eventually written down, this tradition persisted. Before a student can study a sacred text, he must first hear it orally from his teacher. Every text that is read or studied must first be read aloud to the student before he is even allowed to look at it. After this oral recitation, the teacher begins giving the explanation [bshad pa] of the text.

393 byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i lung brgyud

the Śikṣā-samuccaya[394] that was passed on through the masters of the New Translation Period before it became exclusively Nyingma:

> Śāntideva, Eladhari, Jetāri,[395] Candrakīrti the lesser,[396] Puṇyaśrī, the Nepalese Kanakapa,[397] Sumatikīrti,[398] Ngok Loden Sherab[399] (1059-1109), Zhangtshe Pongwa[400] (1059-1109), and Tsang Nagpa[401] (1109-1169).

From Ngok Loden Sherab the lineage also comes down to Tsang Nagpa through Trolungpa[402] and Chawa Chö Seng[403] (1109-1169). From Tsang Nagpa the lineage continues with:

> Palden Tro,[404] Chim Chenpo[405] (1290-1285), Zeu Traktsön,[406] and Chim Lobzang Trakpa[407] (1299-1375).

From Chim Lobzang Trakpa the lineage comes down to Kangyurwa Śākya Gyaltshen[408] and continues with:

> Dorje Denpa Kunga Namgyal,[409] Sönam Chogden,[410] Lodro Thogme,[411] Palden Dondrup,[412] Wangchug Gyaltshen,[413] Ngagwang Namgyal,[414]

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394 bslab btus / bslab pa kun las btus pa

395 dze tā ri

396 zla grags chung ba

397 bal po ka na ka pa

398 su ma ti kīrti

399 rngog blo ldan shes rab

400 Zhangtshe Pongwa Chökyi Lama [zhang tshe spong ba chos kyi bla ma] was a direct student of Ngok Loden Sherab.

401 Tsang Nagpa Tsöndrü Senge [gtsang nag pa brtson 'grus seng ge] was a direct student of Chawa Chö Seng [phyva ba chos seng].

402 Trolungpa Lodro Jungne [gro lung pa blo gros 'byung gnas] was a direct student of Atiśa, Dromtön Gyalwe Jungne ['brom ston rgyal ba'i 'byung gnas] (1005-1064) and Ngok Loden Sherab.

403 Chawa Chö Seng [phyva ba chos seng / phyva ba chos kyi seng ge] was the teacher of Sönam Tsemo [bsod nams rtse mo] (1142-1182).

404 dpal ldan gro

405 Chim Chenpo [mchims chen po] or Chim Namkha Dragpa [mchims nam mkha' grags pa] was a direct student of Palden Tro.

406 ze'u grags brtson

407 Lobzang Trakpa [mchims blo bzang grags pa]

408 bka' 'gyur ba śākya rgyal mtshan

409 rdo rje gdan pa kun dga' rnam rgyal

410 bsod nams mchog ldan

411 blo gros thogs med

Tsültrim Trashi,[415] Rinchen Gyamtsho,[416] Kunga Tendar,[417] Domtsön Kunga Dargye,[418] and Terdag Lingpa Gyurme Dorje.[419]

The Lineage of Teachers of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra at Dzogchen Monastery

Paltrül Rinpoche composed a 'Supplication to the Lineage Masters of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra',[420] which begins with Buddha Śākyamuni and continues all the way down to himself. This lineage supplication also presents the lineage maintained at Śrī Siṃha Shedra. The lineage is not always historically connected in a teacher-student relationship but at times skips a generation or two. The lineage is as follows:

Buddha Śākyamuni, Mañjughoṣa, Śāntideva, Jetāri,[421] Candrakīrti the lesser,[422] Guṇa Śrī,[423] Kanakaśrī,[424] Sumatikīrti,[425] Ngok Loden Sherab[426] (1051), Master Jetsünpa,[427] Butön Rinchen Drup[428] (1290-1364), Thukse Lotsawa,[429] Yagtruk Sangye Pal[430] (1350-1414), Sangye Phel[431]

412 dpal ldan don grub

413 dbang phyug rgyal mtshan

414 ngag dbang rnam rgyal, only mentioned in the lineage of the Śikṣā-samuccaya.

415 tshul khrims bkra shis

416 rin chen rgya mtsho

417 kun dga' bstan dar

418 sdom brtson kun dga' dar rgyas

419 gter bdag gling pa 'gyur med rdo rje

420 spyod 'jug brgyud 'debs

421 dze ta ri, an Indian scholar who studied in Śāntideva's tradition.

422 zla ba grags pa chung ba, a student of Jetāri.

423 gu ṇa śrī [yon tan dpal], a student of Chandrakīrti.

424 ka na ka śrī (or kāṇakaśrī), a student of Guṇa Śrī.

425 A student of Kanakaśrī.

426 rngog blo ldan shes rab

427 slob dpon rje btsun pa who might be identical with Trolungpa [gro lung pa].

428 bu ston rin chen grub

429 thugs sras lo tsā ba, a direct student of Butön.

430 g.yag phrug sangs rgyas dpal, a great scholar of the Sakya school, who wrote a detailed commentary on the Prajñāpāramitā [sher phyin]. His most famous students were Rongtön Mawe Senge [rong ston smra ba'i seng ge chen mo] (1367-1449) and Rendaba Zhönu Lodro [red mda' ba gzhon nu blo gros] (1349-1412). He is also known under the name g.yag ston or g.yag phrug pa. See also *Blue Annals*, page 339. See *gangs can mkhas grub rim byon ming mdzod*, pages 1573-1573.

431 sangs rgyas 'phel, a great Sakya Lama whose teacher was Rongtön Mawe Senge [rong ston smra ba'i seng ge chen mo] (1367-1449), also known as Rongtön Sheja Kunrig Shakya Gyaltshen [rong ston shes bya kun rig shākya rgyal mtshan]. See *Blue Annals*, pages 339-340.

> (1348-1414), Trinle Mikyöpa[432] (1507-1554), Könchok Jungne,[433] Karma Chagme[434] (1613-1678), Pema Rigdzin[435] (1625-1697), Pönlob Namkha Özer,[436] Thekchog Tendzin,[437] Trashi Gyamtso,[438] Rigdzin Zangpo,[439] Pema Trashi,[440] Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye,[441] Jigme Ngotshar,[442] and Paltrül Rinpoche.[443]

It is striking that Paltrül Rinpoche, a great Nyingma scholar, traces his explanation lineage of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra back to masters of the New Translation Period, such as Ngok Loden Sherab, Butön and others. This lineage supplication again suggests that an independent Nyingma explanation lineage tracing itself back to Kawa Paltsek and his first translation of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra no longer exists.

Paltrül Rinpoche's explanation lineage originates from the great masters of the New Translation Period and becomes an exclusively Nyingma lineage only in the 17th century with masters such as Pema Rigdzin and others. This refutes the commonly held belief that all sūtra lineages of the Nyingma School can be traced back to the First Translation Period through an exclusively Nyingma lineage. Nevertheless, Tibetan scholars believe that the reading transmission[444] and explanation lineage[445] of Kawa Paltsek's first translation and Rinchen Zangpo's second translation of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra were all absorbed by Ngok Loden Sherab in his third and final translation of the root text from the Sanskrit.

According to the tradition of Śrī Siṃha Shedra, Paltrül Rinpoche's lineage continues with his famous students such as Ön Urgyen Tendzin Norbu,[446] Thubten Chökyi

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432 phrin las mi bskyod pa, the eighth Karmapa, Mikyö Dorje [mi bskyod rdo rje].

433 dkon mchog 'byung gnas, the ninth Shamarpa (???).

434 karma chags med.

435 pad ma rig 'dzin, the first Dzogchen Rinpoche.

436 dpon slob nam mkha' 'od zer

437 theg mchog bstan ' dzin, the second Dzogchen Pema Rigdzin.

438 bkra shis rgya mtsho

439 rig 'dzin bzang po

440 Khenchen Sengtruk Pema Trashi [seng phrug pad ma bkra shis].

441 rgyal sras gzhan phan mtha' yas.

442 'jigs med ngo mtshar was a direct student of Jigme Lingpa (1730-1798) as well as a student of Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye.

443 Paltrül Rinpoche [dpal sprul 'jigs med chos kyi dbang po].

444 lung brgyud

445 bshad brgyud

446 Ön Urgyen Tendzin Norbu [dbon u rgyan bstan 'dzin nor bu], also known as Urgyen Tenga [u rgyan bstan dga'], was a cousin [tsha bo] of Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye. He studied with Paltrül Rinpoche and also with Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye.

Drakpa,[447] Khenpo Kunpal,[448] Khenpo Yönga,[449] Dzogchen Khenpo Pema Dorje,[450] and Mipham Rinpoche.[451] Ön Urgyen Tendzin Norbu's main student was Khenpo Zhenga, who taught the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra extensively to Batur Khenpo Thubga.[452] Batur Khenpo Thubga taught the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra according to Khenpo Kunpal's commentary to Khenpo Pentse (1931-2002).[453]

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447 Khenpo Thubten Chökyi Drakpa [thub bstan chos kyi grags pa] was also known as Minyag Kunzang Sönam [mi nyag kun bzang bsod nams].

448 Khenpo Kunpal (1862-1943) had several names, including Gegong Khenpo Kunpal [dge gong mkhan po kun dpal], Kunzang Palden [kun bzang dpal ldan], and also Thubten Kunzang Chödrak [thub bstan kun bzang chos grags].

449 Khenpo Yönga [mkhan po yon dga' / mkhan po yon tan rgya mtsho] studied with Paltrül Rinpoche and with Ön Urgyen Tendzin Norbu.

450 Dzogchen Khenpo Pema Dorje [rdzogs chen mkhan po pad ma rdo rje] was a 19th century master who studied with Gyalse Zhenpen Thaye, the fourth Dzogchen Rinpoche, and Khenchen Sengtruk Pema Trashi [mkhan chen seng sprugs padma bkra shis]. He was a classmate of Paltrül Rinpoche and one of the foremost khenpos of Dzogchen Monastery. For biographical notes see *Masters of Meditation*, page 200.

451 Mipham Rinpoche [mi pham rin po che] (1846-1912), also known as Ju Mipham Jamyang Namgyal ['ju mi pham 'jam dbyangs rnam rgyal], received teachings from Paltrül Rinpoche on the chapter concerning transcendental knowledge and shortly thereafter, in 1878, wrote a commentary to this chapter. See *nor bu ke ta ka*.

452 Batur Khenpo Thubga [ba thur mkhan po thub dga'] was also known as Khenpo Thubten Chöphel [mkhan po thub bstan chos 'phel]. Along with a group of about one thousand Mongolians, his family had migrated from Mongolia to East Tibet following the visit to Mongolia of the third Dzogchen Pema Rigdzin. In addition to Khenpo Zhenga, Batur Khenpo Thubga also received teachings on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra from Khenpo Yönga. As he had studied at Paltrül Rinpoche's hermitage called Changma Ritrö [lcang ma ri khrod], he was also known as Changmay Khenchen Thubga Yibzhin Norbu [lcang ma'i mkhan chen thub dga' yid bzhin nor bu].

453 Regarding Khenpo Pentse's [mkhan po pad ma tshe dbang] education in sūtrayāna, his main root guru [thun mong ma yin pa'i rtsa ba'i bla ma] was Batur Khenpo Thubga. For his education in the teachings of the Great Perfection according to the Longchen Nyingthig tradition, his main root guru was Adzom Drugpa's son Gyalse Gyurme Dorje [rgyal sras 'gyur med rdo rje / sras 'gyur dga']. In 1958 he received from Gyalse Gyurme Dorje the extraordinary oral transmission [thun mong ma yin pa'i snyan brgyud] of the Longchen Nyingthig tradition. During the time when the Chinese suppressed the practice of Buddhism in East Tibet, from the late 1950s until the mid 1970s, Khenpo Pentse was unable to wear robes; pretending to be a lay person, he remained in retreat in his native village, Arik Deba [a rig sde ba], in the district of Arik Dza [a rig rdza] in East Tibet. When the Chinese stopped the persecution of Buddhist practitioners toward the end of the 1970s, Khenpo Pentse again began teaching and was free to wear his robes. Upon the recommendation of Khenpo Thubnor [mkhan po thug nor], Khenpo Pentse was invited in 1982 by Alag Zenkar Rinpoche [a lag gzen dkar rin po che] to teach khenpos at a newly-founded (1980) school for Tibetan studies called Pöyig Lobdra Chenmo [bod yid slob grva chen mo], next to Dzogchen monastery. At the time, this was the only place of study at Dzogchen monastery, since the Śrī Siṃha Shedra had been completely destroyed by the Chinese around 1959. Khenpo Pentse stayed for three years at the Pöyig Lobdra and taught

Khenpo Pentse received Khenpo Zhenga's annotation commentary[454] on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra from Dzogchen Khenpo Thubnor.[455] He also received Ngülchu Thogme's commentary[456] on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra from Dzogchen Khenpo Tsering Nyima.[457] Furthermore, he received teachings on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra from Khenpo Thubga's student Khenpo Chödor.[458] During the latter part of his life, until his death in 2001, Khenpo Pentse was considered the main khenpo at Dzogchen Śrī Siṃha Shedra, although his main residence was Phugkhung Gompa[459] in the district of Arik Dza.[460]

Khenpo Chöga[461] received teachings on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra from many masters, and studied and practiced the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra for many years. He received numerous commentaries on the root text of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra from his main teacher Khenpo Pentse, including Khenpo Kunpal's commentary twice, and Khenpo Zhenga's annotation commentary once. Khenpo Chöga also received a commentary on Khenpo Zhenga's annotation commentary from Khenpo Thubnor. He received teachings on Ngülchu Thogme's commentary from Khenpo Tsering Nyima and from Serta Khenpo Sori.[462] He received a very extensive commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra root text over a period of two years from Khenpo Kunub Özer,[463] who had received his transmission from Khenpo Thubnyen,[464] who in turn was a direct student of Khenpo Zhenga. Furthermore, Khenpo Chöga received detailed teachings on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra root text from Khenpo Akhu Dolo.[465] He also received Khenpo Kunpal's commentary as well as another

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extensively. He then returned to his native village and founded a shedra called Ngedön Shedrub Dargye Ling [nges don bshad sgrub dar rgyas gling] at Phugkhung Monastery [phug khungs bde chen chos 'khor lhun po], his childhood monastery, a sub-monastery [dgon lag] of Zhechen. This shedra became his main residence. At present, 200 monks are studying at this shedra, which has produced many khenpos. Every year Khenpo Pentse used to go for a short period of time to teach both at the Śrī Siṃha Shedra and at Zhechen, where he had also started a shedra. In 2002 Khenpo Pentse passed away at the age of 70/71 at Samye Chimphu [bsam yas mchims phu].

454 gzhan dga' *mchan 'grel*

455 rdzogs chen mkhan po thub nor

456 dngul chu thogs med 'grel pa

457 rdzogs chen mkhan po tshe ring nyi ma

458 mkhan po chos rdor

459 phug khungs bde chen chos 'khor lhun po

460 a rig rdza

461 rdzogs chen mkhan po chos dga'

462 mkhan po gso rig

463 sku gnubs 'od zer

464 mkhan po thub bstan snyan grags

465 a khu rdo lo / a khu rdo rje

commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra root text from his classmate Khenpo Urgyen Rigdzin.[466]

These days, scholars at Dzogchen Monastery first give new students a commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra root text, which they must memorize. The students next study Ngülchu Thogme's commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. At the same time, the students learn the interpretations of other schools on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. Later, they study Khenpo Zhenga's annotation commentary. Finally, they learn Khenpo Kunpal's commentary in conjunction with an oral commentary on the root text. All these commentaries on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra are taught in the practice-oriented tradition of Paltrül Rinpoche, in which all scholastic knowedge must be meditated upon and thereby applied to one's mind.

In Conclusion

We hope that presenting this detailed introduction gives the reader sufficient background information to be able to appreciate the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra in an historical perspective. Although this text has been taught, re-interpreted and expounded upon for centuries by hundreds of teachers from various lineages, Paltrül Rinpoche stands head and shoulders above them all. As a leading exponent of the non-sectarian movement[467] of East Tibet in the 19th century, Paltrül Rinpoche studied and mastered all the major Indian and Tibetan commentaries on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. His eclectic knowledge has been preserved in the written commentaries of his personal students and in the unbroken oral explanation lineage that is still transmitted to this present day.

From the written reports of his students and the surviving folklore concerning him, we can surmise that Paltrül Rinpoche's open-mindedness, acute analytical skills, profound understanding and impressive gift for synthesis made his teachings on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra the most complete and perceptive ever given on this scripture.

Among the written commentaries on Paltrül Rinpoche's teachings, Khenpo Kunpal's commentary best captures Paltrül Rinpoche's interpretation of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra according to the practice lineage of the Nyingma School. This commentary, however, is not self-explanatory and was never meant to be studied alone. This is a treatise that requires careful explanation from qualified Buddhist scholars.

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466 mkhan po u rgyan rig 'dzin

467 The non-sectarian movement [ris med], headed by Jamyang Khyetse Wangpo (1820-1892), Kongtrül Lodro Thaye (1813-1899), Chokgyur Lingpa (1829-1879), Paltrül Rinpoche (1808-1887) and many other great masters, was a movement to counteract sectarianism. These masters, renowned authorities on the teachings of all schools and lineages of Tibetan Buddhism, actively spread the teachings of all schools without any sectarian bias.

The great scholars at Śrī Siṃha Shedra, such as Khenpo Kunpal, Batur Khenpo Thubga, Khenpo Pentse and Khenpo Chöga, are eminently qualified exponents of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra explanation lineage, a lineage that can be traced back for over a thousand years to India, the land of its origin. From the 8th century until this very day, a vital and uninterrupted tradition of devotion, study and commentary has been maintained on this most seminal of sacred Buddhist texts.

Introduction by Dzogchen Khenpo Chöga

This famous Mahāyāna text, the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, 'Entering the Conduct of the Bodhisattvas', was composed as a teaching poem in the Sanskrit language by the 8th century master, Śāntideva, at the great Buddhist university of Nālandā, one of the major centers of Buddhist learning and practice in ancient India. The main subject of the text is the motivation of bodhicitta and the practice of the six transcendental perfections. The precious bodhicitta and the six transcendental perfections are the very core of the path of the bodhisattva, the heroic practitioner who aspires to perfect enlightenment for the sake of all sentient beings.

The precious bodhicitta is the unfailing seed which gives rise to buddhahood. "With it you can attain buddhahood. Without it you have no chance of attaining enlightenment at all." The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra teaches how to generate bodhicitta and how to practice the six transcendental perfections, thus showing us how to attain the unexcelled level of perfect enlightenment. Whoever comes in contact with this text will benefit greatly.

At first it is important to understand that becoming a buddha is the supreme attainment possible for any being. There is no state higher than that of a buddha. A buddha is someone who has attained supreme enlightenment and is, therefore, endowed with inconceivable wisdom, compassion and powers, with all possible qualities, as well as being devoid of all defects. A buddha is free from any delusion or error. In all of saṃsāra and nirvāṇa, none is superior to a buddha.

Bodhicitta, the Supreme Wish

If we wish for someone to achieve even the exalted status of a world monarch, this is still a very limited wish. But, to wish for someone to become a buddha, to attain perfect enlightenment, is the very greatest wish one can make. Wishing for all sentient beings to attain the level of buddhahood is the ultimate, the highest of all wishes. This unexcelled wish is called the precious bodhicitta. Bodhicitta is most precious because it is directed toward the most precious of all achievements, buddhahood itself.

Bodhicitta is the wish: "May I free all sentient beings from their suffering and establish them on the level of perfect enlightenment." Or, even better, it is the commitment: "I will free all sentient beings from their suffering and establish them on the level of perfect enlightenment." If, as a practitioner, you lack this wish or commitment, you will never reach enlightenment. Even when you practice meditation intensively, at some point your progress toward enlightenment will become impeded. Thus, even the

progress of the śrāvakas, arhats and pratyekabuddhas,[468] who lack this wish and commitment, is limited.

Most Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna Buddhists practice bodhicitta as an aspiration,[469] wishing, "May I free all sentient beings from their suffering and establish them on the level of perfect enlightenment." However, while they may give rise to this wish, they often lack the courage to develop the firm commitment:[470] "I will free all sentient beings from their suffering and establish them on the level of perfect enlightenment." Practicing with that commitment is true bodhicitta. In order to develop that level of commitment and confidence, you must have some realization of the buddha nature,[471] profound emptiness.[472] Unless you have gained some degree of realization of profound emptiness, genuine compassion for all sentient beings cannot truly arise in your mind.

Bodhicitta has two aspects,[473] compassion[474] and knowledge.[475] With compassion you focus on the benefit for others[476] by committing, "I will free all beings from their suffering." With knowledge you focus on perfect enlightenment[477] by committing, "I will establish all sentient beings on the level of perfect enlightenment." Note that compassion and loving kindness[478] are by themselves not what is known as bodhicitta; instead, they are the basis from which bodhicitta develops.

Mind has a natural tendency to avoid suffering and accomplish happiness. If this natural tendency becomes vast and altruistic, it turns into bodhicitta. Instead of trying to accomplish personal happiness, a bodhisattva aspires to establish all infinite sentient beings on the level of the ultimate happiness of buddhahood. Rather than freeing only himself from misery, he aspires to free all infinite beings from suffering and the root of suffering.

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468 The term 'śrāvaka', literally 'listener', refers to the followers of the Hīnayāna tradition, who proceed through four levels of spiritual attainments and reach the level of an arhat. A pratyekabuddha, literally 'self-arisen buddha', is someone who has accumulated sufficient merit and wisdom in former lifetimes to attain nirvāṇa without the teachings of a buddha. A pratyekabuddha stays totally private and will never teach others.

469 smon lam

470 dam bca' ba

471 bde gshegs snying po

472 zab mo stong pa nyid

473 don gnyis sam zur gnyis

474 snying rje

475 shes rab

476 snying rjes gzhan don la dmigs pa

477 shes rab kyis rdzogs byang la dmigs pa

478 byams pa

To understand suffering and the causes for suffering, a bodhisattva must understand the truth of suffering[479] and the truth of its origination.[480] To understand true happiness and the causes for happiness, a bodhisattva must understand the truth of cessation[481] and the truth of the path[482] that leads to cessation. In this manner bodhicitta encompasses the four noble truths.[483] Among all thoughts and wishes, bodhicitta is the most noble.

Generating Bodhicitta

Generating bodhicitta[484] means 'making your mind vast' or 'making your mind courageous'. In general, our minds are limited and restricted by ego-clinging.[485] But the mind itself is as vast as space. A bodhisattva seeks to open his mind and to make it as vast as the reaches of space. He contemplates the infinite number of sentient beings, the objects of his attention. He contemplates the infinite amount of suffering, which he wants to remove. He contemplates the infinite qualities of buddhahood, which he wants all sentient beings to obtain. He contemplates the infinite time-span, as he has decided to free all beings from their infinite past karmas and to establish them forever on the level of complete enlightenment. Through these contemplations he breaks through the confines of a mind limited by ego-clinging. The precious bodhicitta is the antidote to ego-clinging.[486] The feature of bodhicitta is to focus on others,[487] while the character of ego-clinging is to focus on oneself.[488]

When generating bodhicitta, three levels of courage[489] can be distinguished: the courage of a king, the courage of a boatman, and the courage of a shepherd.

What is meant by the courage of a king? A king's first priorities are to overcome all his rivals, to promote those who support him, and to proclaim himself sovereign. Only once these aims have been secured does he turn to the care of his subjects. Similarly,

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479 sdug bsngal gyi bden pa

480 kun 'byung gi bden pa

481 'gog pa'i bden pa

482 lam gyi bden pa

483 Among the four noble truths [bden pa bzhi], the truth of suffering is something one needs to understand [sdug bsngal shes par bya], the truth of origination is something one needs to overcome [kun 'byung spong bar bya], the truth of cessation is something to aim for ['gog pa sngon du bzhag dgos], and the truth of the path is something that must be applied to one's own mind [lam rgyud la brten dgos].

484 sems bskyed

485 bdag 'dzin

486 bdag 'dzin gi ldog phyogs byang chub sems rin po che

487 gzhan la dmigs pa

488 bdag tu dmigs pa

489 blo stobs

the wish to attain buddhahood for oneself first and then to bring others to buddhahood subsequently is called the king's way of generating bodhicitta.[490] This is the wish: "May I be liberated from suffering and obtain the level of perfect enlightenment."

What is meant by the courage of a boatman? A boatman aims to arrive on the other shore at the same time as all of his passengers. Likewise, the wish to achieve buddhahood for oneself and all beings simultaneously is known as the boatman's way of generating bodhicitta.[491] This is the wish: "May I liberate myself and all sentient beings from suffering and obtain the level of perfect enlightenment."

What is meant by the courage of a shepherd? A shepherd drives his sheep in front of him, making sure that they find grass and water, and are not attacked by wild beasts. He himself follows behind. In the same way, wishing to establish all beings of the three realms on the level of perfect enlightenment before attaining perfect enlightenment for oneself is known as the shepherd's way of generating bodhicitta,[492] or the incomparable way of generating bodhicitta.[493] This is the wish: "May I liberate all sentient beings from their suffering and establish them on the level of perfect enlightenment."

The king's way of generating bodhicitta is the least courageous of the three, the boatman's way is more courageous, and the shepherd's way is the most courageous of all. Practitioners of ordinary capacity, those who follow the way of the king, will reach perfect enlightenment within 'thirty-three countless aeons';[494] those of mediocre capacity, who follow the way of the boatman, will reach perfect enlightenment within 'seven countless aeons';[495] while those of highest capacity, who follow the way of the shepherd, will reach perfect enlightenment within 'three countless aeons'.[496]

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[490] rgyal po lta bu'i sems bskyed

[491] mnyan pa lta bu'i sems bskyed

[492] rdzi bo lta bu'i sems bskyed

[493] dpe med pa'i sems bskyed

[494] bskal pa grangs med sum cu rtsa gsum

[495] bskal pa grangs med bdun

[496] See *kun bzang bla ma'i zhal lung gi zin bris*, page 221-222. The term 'incalculable' or 'countless' [grangs med; skr. asaṃkhya] is a number that is described as 'ten to the power of fifty-nine'. See *Jewellery of Scripture*, pages 144-145; *bu ston chos 'byung*, pages 71-72; and *ston pa śākya thub pa'i rnam thar*, page 25. Most of the Buddhist scriptures report that it took Buddha Śākyamuni '10 to the power of fifty-nine great aeons' to perfect the two accumulations of merit and wisdom in order to accomplish the first bodhisattva level [sa dang po]. This is called 'the first countless (time period)' [grangs med dang po]. Then it took him another '10 to the power of fifty-nine aeons' to perfect the two accumulations of merit and wisdom in order to progress from the second bodhisattva level to the seventh [sa dang po nas sa bdun pa'i bar]. This is called 'the second countless (time period)' [grangs med gnyis pa]. And another '10 to the power of fifty-nine aeons' was required for the Buddha to perfect the two accumulations of merit and wisdom in order to progress from the eighth to the tenth bodhisattva level [sa brgyad pa nas sa bcu pa'i

Bodhicitta of Aspiration and Bodhicitta of Application

One must also distinguish between relative[497] and absolute bodhicitta.[498] Absolute bodhicitta refers to one's buddha nature and only begins to be realized from the first bodhisattva level onward. Relative bodhicitta has two aspects: the bodhicitta of aspiration and the bodhicitta of application. Neither the bodhicitta of aspiration nor the bodhicitta of application refers to action.[499] Instead, both are concerned with motivation[500] and intention.[501]

Both types of relative bodhicitta are concerned with motivation, rather than the actual application[502] of the six pāramitās, the six transcendental perfections.[503] It is essential that one first give rise to the correct motivation; then, while maintaining this motivation, you can carry out any of the six transcendental perfections.

To commit oneself to the fruition, the state of perfect enlightenment, is what is known as 'the bodhicitta of aspiration'.[504] It is the motivation: "I will liberate all sentient beings from their suffering and establish them on the level of perfect enlightenment."

To commit oneself to the causes of perfect enlightenment, which are the practice of the six transcendental perfections, is what is known as 'the bodhicitta of application'.[505] This is the motivation to enter into the conduct of any of the six transcendental perfections: "In order to liberate all sentient beings from their suffering and to establish them on the level of perfect enlightenment, I will practice generosity, discipline, patience, diligence, meditation, and knowledge." Again, at this stage, one is simply giving rise to the commitment to do so; one has not yet come to the actual application of any of the six transcendental perfections.

For example, the commitment, "In order to liberate all sentient beings from their suffering and establish them on the level of perfect enlightenment, I will study this text," is the bodhicitta of application. The bodhicitta of application requires the

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bar]. This is called 'the third countless (time period)' [grangs med gsum pa]. Thus Buddha Śākyamuni needed 'three countless great aeons' [bskal chen grangs med gsum] to perfect the vast accumulations of merit and wisdom required to reach the tenth bodhisattva level. See *ston pa śākya thub pa'i rnam thar*, pages 17-29; *bu ston chos 'byung*, pages 72-75; *klong chen chos 'byung*, pages 79-83. For details on the term 'great aeon' [bskal chen] see Khenpo Chöga's commentary to text section 39.

497 kun rdzob byang chub kyi sems

498 don dam byang chub kyi sems

499 spyod pa

500 kun slong

501 bsam pa

502 sbyor ba

503 phar phyin drug

504 'bras bu la dam bca' ba smon pa byang chub sems

505 rgyu la dam bca' ba 'jug pa byang chub sems

motivation of actually wanting to do something; you actually want to engage in the conduct of the perfections. When you then study the text with that motivation, you are already practicing the perfections. You have brought bodhicitta of application into the application of the perfections. Intention and application have come together.

Bodhicitta generates the highest degree of virtue, virtue that leads to the liberation of the greater vehicle,[506] the attainment of complete enlighenment. This ultimate degree of virtue entails practice with the intentional focus or aim[507] of reaching perfect enlightenment. Otherwise, the practice of the six perfections is reduced to a lesser degree of virtue, either the virtue that leads to the accumulation of worldly merit,[508] or in the best case, the virtue that leads to liberation[509] from saṃsāra. On the other hand, to only give rise to the bodhicitta motivation without actually carrying out the six transcendental perfections will also fail to lead one to the state of perfect enlightenment.

Understanding the preciousness of buddhahood and generating the wish to attain the state of fruition,[510] complete enlightenment, is the bodhicitta of aspiration. Maintaining this motivation and wishing to bring this fruition about by practicing the causes that lead to it, the practice of the six transcendental perfections, is the bodhicitta of application.

Both of these types of bodhicitta are directly concerned with motivation rather than with action. These two motivations are what is called ‘relative bodhicitta’. To actually practice the six transcendental perfections of generosity, discipline, patience, diligence, meditation, and wisdom is the actual application itself. Finally, truly seeing one’s own buddha nature is ‘absolute bodhicitta’.

The Six Transcendental Perfections

For three countless aeons Buddha Śākyamuni was occupied with nothing other than cultivating the motivation of bodhicitta and practicing the six transcendental perfections. This practice alone led him to the attainment of perfect enlightenment. All the vast teachings of the Buddha are included within this central practice of the bodhisattva, cultivating the motivation of bodhicitta and practicing the six transcendental perfections. The six transcendental perfections are generosity, discipline, patience, diligence, meditation, and knowledge.

Generosity:[511] The practice of generosity has the aim of cutting through all fixations[512] and attachments[513] such as clinging to the body,[514] to material wealth and

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[506] theg chen thar pa cha mthun gyi dge ba

[507] dmigs yul

[508] ’jig rten gyi bsod nams cha mthun gyi dge ba

[509] thar pa cha mthun pa’i dge ba

[510] ’bras bu thob ’dod kyi blo

[511] sbyin pa

enjoyments,[515] and finally even to whatever spiritual merit[516] you may have accumulated. In order to practice generosity, you must develop a generous mindset.[517] With a generous mindset you are able to give away things that you are fond of, things you really wish to possess, as well as things that you truly need. To merely give up something that you neither like nor need is not what is meant by a generous mindset.

If your practice of generosity is embraced with the recognition of non-conceptual wisdom,[518] then only can it truly be called 'transcendental' generosity. If your practice of generosity lacks the recognition of non-conceptual wisdom, it is still only conventional generosity.[519] Enlightenment is only possible through the quality of transcendence. Transcendence[520] means 'to go beyond saṃsāra', 'to go beyond ego-clinging',[521] 'to go beyond worldly thinking'.[522] In order to attain enlightenment, one must include the recognition of non-conceptual wisdom in the application of all six perfections. Then only are they 'transcendental perfections'.

Discipline:[523] Discipline means giving up all fixation on non-virtue.[524] Due to our afflictions[525] and our habitual patterns,[526] we often react and behave in non-virtuous ways. Discipline is nothing other than letting go of fixating on negative thoughts, emotions and patterns. Instead, you make the firm resolve, "I will not allow myself to stray into non-virtuous actions of body, speech, and mind." For instance, the thought, "I hate that person and I will hit him", is a mental fixation on a negative emotion. Discipline means learning how to release this negativity. If your practice of discipline

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512 'dzin pa

513 chags pa

514 lus

515 longs spyod

516 bsod nams

517 btong sems

518 lit. wisdom that does not conceptualize the three spheres ['khor gsum mi dmigs pa'i ye shes], i.e., wisdom beyond subject, object, and the interaction between them. This is explained at length in chapter nine of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra.

519 sbyin pa tsam

520 pha rol

521 bdag 'dzin las pa rol du phyin pa

522 'jig rten pa'i bsam pa las pha rol tu phyin pa

523 tshul khrims

524 mi dge ba

525 nyon mongs

526 bag chags

is grounded in the recognition of non-conceptual wisdom, only then can it be called 'transcendental discipline'.[527]

Patience:[528] If afflictions and negative patterns arise in your mind and you do not act them out, you are practicing patience. For instance, anger may arise in your mind, causing you to think, "I want to harm this person." However, if you refrain from acting on this fixation, on this negative impulse, you are practicing patience. Furthermore, patience means to actually release all fixation on the varieties of mental turmoil.[529] You release your grasping at anger, greed, arrogance, jealousy, suffering, anxiety, and so forth. Finally, only if your practice is grounded in the recognition of non-conceptual wisdom may it truly be called 'transcendental patience'.[530]

Diligence:[531] Diligence means to endeavor joyously in virtue, to be happy to practice virtue.[532] Diligence involves overcoming fixation on the lazy mind which fails to practice virtue, which fails to practice dharma. Grounding your practice of diligence in the recognition of non-conceptual wisdom, it becomes 'transcendental diligence'.[533] Whenever you engage in study, contemplation, and meditation[534] or any other virtuous action, you should undertake these tasks in a happy and inspired frame of mind. If you practice the dharma when your mind is tainted by afflictions, you will only create non-virtue.

Meditation:[535] Meditation means letting go of all fixations which involve being caught up in distraction.[536] The state of meditation refers to an undistracted mind, which is also a centered and relaxed state of mind. People are very attached to distractions. They must keep their minds occupied with something and find themselves unable to leave the mind in its natural state. When your meditation is grounded in the recognition of non-conceptual wisdom, then only can it truly be called 'transcendental meditation'.[537]

Meditation here mainly refers to the two types of meditation practice: śamathā´,[538] which means 'calm abiding´, and ´vipaśyanā',[539] which means 'clear insight'. The

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527 tshul khrims pha rol tu phyin pa

528 bzod pa

529 sems 'khrugs par 'dzin pa

530 bzod pa pha rol tu phyin pa

531 brtson 'grus

532 dge ba la spro ba

533 brtson 'grus pha rol tu phyin pa

534 thos bsam bsgom gsum

535 bsam gtan

536 g.yeng ba la 'dzin pa

537 bsam gtan pha rol tu phyin pa

538 zhi gnas

539 lhag mthong

beginner first trains his mind in ´calm abiding´, free from analysis and mental distinctions. Once he has attained a certain stability in 'calm abiding', he then applies his knowledge of the dharma to this state and sees the nature of the truth.[540]

Knowledge:[541] The perfect bodhisattva has the knowledge and wisdom which enable him to maintain the recognition of the buddha nature while he continues to practice generosity, discipline, patience, diligence, and meditation. Bodhisattvas are able to acquire this knowledge through studying, contemplating, and meditating according to the teachings of the Buddha. They apply this knowledge to all the other five perfections. Only by bringing the recognition of the buddha nature, of profound emptiness, into the practice of the perfections do they become 'transcendental'.

Knowledge in this case means 'transcendental knowledge'. This knowledge goes far beyond the knowledge of what is visible and tangible via sensory perception alone. Rather, it is the knowledge that is able to recognize the buddha nature, profound emptiness, non-conceptual wisdom. Within the recognition of non-conceptual wisdom,[542] all thoughts, fixations, and attachments are naturally absent. This recognition must be applied to every situation in life. This recognition, the true meaning of transcendental knowledge, must be applied to the practice of each of the first five perfections. 'Transcendental' literally means 'gone beyond'.[543] Transcendental knowledge is a knowledge that has gone beyond ego-clinging[544] and ignorance.[545] The knowledge that has recognized egolessness[546] is transcendental knowledge. Genuine transcendence[547] is only gained from the first bodhisattva level onward.

Karma and the Nature of Saṃsāra

Since time without beginning, all sentient beings have been circling about in the limitless ocean of saṃsāra. Though all beings harbor an infinite variety of thoughts, hopes and fears, all have one common wish—all wish to achieve happiness. Our present situation results from our past actions, from our karma. Through the power of formerly accumulated causes, various experiences of happiness, of suffering, and of neutral states manifest. These range from the experience of the very peak of saṃsāra, all the way down to that of the lowest depths of saṃsāra.

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540 bden pa'i gnas lugs mthong ba

541 shes rab

542 dmigs pa med pa'i ye shes

543 pha rol tu phyin pa

544 bdag 'dzin

545 gti mug

546 bdag med rtogs pa'i shes rab

547 pha rol tu phyin pa mtshan nyid pa

While by nature we all aspire to happiness, nonetheless, we seem ignorant about the cause for happiness, which is the accumulation of merit through virtuous deeds. Through the power of our habits, we tend not to engage in virtuous actions but automatically tend toward non-virtuous actions. Virtuous actions often seem to require great struggle and effort, while non-virtuous deeds come quite easily to us.

Karma[548] means action,[549] which is the mind's capacity to set into motion a virtuous, non-virtuous, or neutral thought, emotion, or deed. Merit[550] is a powerful mindset which grants us the capacity to avoid conditions such as disharmony, suffering, obstacles, illnesses, and so forth. It is the power of the mind to create harmonious circumstances. Merit is something that each being must actively generate and accumulate.

The subtle workings of karma can only be understood by a perfectly enlightened buddha. A buddha clearly sees which action leads to which kind of result, even over aeons and aeons of birth upon rebirth. Based on this knowledge, a buddha teaches the points of conduct, such as the ten virtuous actions, the behavior that one must adopt and the actions that one must avoid. If we want to achieve happiness in this and future lifetimes, we must practice the ten virtuous actions. If we continue to follow the ten non-virtuous actions, in spite of aspiring to happiness, our actions are opposed to our expectations, and we will end up in miserable states of existence.

All actions that give rise to harmony and positive conditions are called virtuous or wholesome actions.[551] All actions that cause disharmony and negative conditions are called non-virtuous or unwholesome actions.[552] Happiness and its causes are positive and virtuous. Suffering and its causes are negative and non-virtuous. Both virtue and merit, non-virtue and de-merit depend on the mind and are created by the mind.

The very fact that virtuous actions lead to happiness and non-virtuous actions to suffering is what is referred to as the law of cause and effect, the law of karma.[553] At the very beginning, even before deciding that you want to become a Buddhist and take refuge in the Buddha, the dharma, and the saṃgha, you must first understand and accept the law of karma. Without understanding and accepting the law of karma, and hence living a life which accords with the ethics of the bodhisattva, there is no chance of attaining enlightenment.

You are heir to your own past karma and in the present are actively creating your future karma. Buddhist practitioners assume complete responsibility for their own karma. They know they have created their own suffering as well as their own

548 las

549 las ka

550 bsod nams

551 dge ba, skr. kuśala

552 mi dge ba, skr. akuśala

553 las rgyu 'bras

happiness, and they recognize that the process of freeing themselves from saṃsāra's suffering also depends entirely upon themselves.

A Buddhist acknowledges the law of cause and effect. If one does not believe in the positive or negative consequences of one's actions and does not follow the ten virtuous actions and the conduct of the bodhisattva, the practice of the genuine dharma is simply not possible. Believing one can cause harm to others and still progress on the path to enlightenment is delusion.

The Two Accumulations of Merit and Wisdom

The very essence of the Buddhist teachings, the buddha dharma, is to cut through fixation.[554] Fixation and attachment are the roots of saṃsāra; they bind us to saṃsāra. Mind has the capacity to generate powerful thoughts which can serve to loosen up our fixations on saṃsāra. Thoughts that carry such power are known as 'conceptual merit'.[555]

The purpose of accumulating conceptual merit is to change our negative patterns into virtuous ones, to loosen up our habitual fixation on negativity.[556] Eventually, the gathering of conceptual merit brings fixation to an end, allowing wisdom to dawn. Once grasping and fixation have gone, the buddha nature is revealed and can be recognized. The power of merit ultimately leads to the dawn of wisdom, the recognition of our buddha nature.

To attain enlightenment one must gather the two accumulations, the 'accumulation of conceptual merit' and the 'accumulation of non-conceptual wisdom'.[557] One truly possesses relative bodhicitta only through having gathered considerable conceptual merit. Therefore, the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra teaches many methods for generating conceptual merit.

When relative bodhicitta has firmly taken root in your mind, you are able to generate a power of merit through which absolute bodhicitta, non-conceptual wisdom, can arise. Non-conceptual wisdom is none other than the recognition of the buddha nature, egolessness, profound emptiness. This recognition is beyond thoughts; it utterly cuts through all fixation on saṃsāra.

The practice of relative bodhicitta[558] furthers the accumulation of merit; the practice of absolute bodhicitta[559] furthers the accumulation of wisdom.

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554 'dzin pa

555 dmigs bcas kyi bsod nams

556 sdig pa

557 dmigs med ye shes kyi tshogs

558 kun rdzob byang chub kyi sems

559 don dam byang chub kyi sems

In addition to gathering the two accumulations, one must also purify the two obscurations. These are the obscurations of afflictions[560] and the obscurations of cognition.[561] To attain enlightenment one must both perfect the two accumulations and purify the two obscurations.

Generally, one can say that the two accumulations are the remedies for the two obscurations. The accumulation of conceptual merit[562] remedies the obscuration of the gross afflictions,[563] and the accumulation of non-conceptual wisdom[564] remedies the remaining subtle levels of afflictions and the obscurations of cognition.[565]

Furthermore, practicing the first five perfections gathers the accumulation of merit, while practicing the perfection of wisdom gathers the accumulation of wisdom. If a bodhisattva has the transcendental knowledge to maintain the recognition of non-conceptual wisdom while simultaneously practicing the other five perfections, then both accumulations are being gathered together. This is called practicing the unity of merit and wisdom.[566] The practice of merit enhances the wisdom practice, and the wisdom practice enhances the merit practice.

The accumulation of merit alone leads to rebirth in the higher realms and to the perfect conditions necessary to practice dharma. When a practitioner has gathered great merit, transcendental knowledge may dawn in his mind. Without sufficient merit, people will not be able to recognize transcendental knowledge.

Buddha Śākyamuni practiced the accumulation of merit on its own for one incalculable aeon,[567] an inconceivably long time. During the second incalculable aeon he was able to recognize wisdom and hence practiced the union of the accumulation of merit and the accumulation of wisdom. In this way, he traversed the first through the seventh bodhisattva levels. Finally, during the third incalculable aeon, he continued to practice the union of merit and wisdom, traversing the eighth through the tenth bodhisattva levels.

Having thus completed the five paths and the ten levels, he was able to transcend even the realization of a tenth level bodhisattva and thus attain perfect enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree in Bodhgaya, becoming a fully enlightened buddha. A practitioner must understand the connection between merit and wisdom. Only when great merit has been gathered will wisdom dawn in the practitioner's mind. As it is said in the Vajrayāna teachings:

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[560] nyon mongs kyi sgrib pa

[561] shes bya'i sgrib pa

[562] dmigs bcas bsod nams kyi tshogs

[563] nyon mongs pa'i sgrib pa

[564] dmigs med ye shes kyi tshogs

[565] shes bya'i sgrib pa

[566] tshogs gnyis zung 'jug

[567] bskal pa grangs med gcig

As far as the ultimate, the co-emergent wisdom, is concerned,
Know that it is foolish to rely upon any methods other than
Practices for gathering the accumulations and purifying obscurations,
As well as the blessings of the glorious root guru.

don dam lhan cig skyes pa'i ye shes ni
tshogs bsags sgrib pa dag pa'i lag rjes dang
dpal ldan bla ma'i byin rlabs kho na las
thabs gzhan brten pa rmongs par shes par bya

Gathering the accumulations, purifying the obscurations, and receiving the blessings of the guru all lead to the same point. Gathering the accumulations leads to the creation of harmonious circumstances.[568] Purifying the obscurations causes all disruptive circumstances[569] to be dispelled. When all harmonious circumstances have been established, all disruptive circumstances have naturally vanished. 'Blessing' is the energy through which this transformation is brought about.

When you have gathered great merit your mind will change, and wisdom will dawn. This transformation is known as the blessing of the master. Through the master's blessing, the practitioner's mind is ripened, and wisdom dawns.

Thus, we can see that these three aspects of purifying the two obscurations,[570] perfecting the two accumulations,[571] and ripening one's mind[572] through the blessing of the master all occur simultaneously. The rising of the sun, the dispelling of darkness, and the illumination of the world happen all at once.

A beginner should start out with practices for gathering the accumulation of conceptual merit. He should practice going for refuge, developing relative bodhicitta, practicing visualization, as well as the practice of the seven branches. The seven branches are: offering prostrations, presenting offerings, making confessions, rejoicing in merit, requesting the buddhas not to pass into nirvāṇa, supplicating the buddhas to turn the wheel of dharma, and dedicating the merit. Once these teachings have been received, a beginner has the perfect tools for generating great conceptual merit without needing to undergo any hardships.

One must also practice the accumulation of wisdom at the same time as engaging in these practices. A practitioner should receive the teachings on how to recognize buddha nature from a truly qualified master. Although the beginning student might

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568 mthun rkyen

569 'gal rkyen

570 sgrib gnyis dag

571 tshogs gnyis rdzogs

572 rgyud smin

still be thoroughly caught up in dualistic mind, nonetheless, he would make some progress toward wisdom practice.

Wisdom can only be recognized by transcendental intelligence or transcendental knowledge.[573] The ordinary conceptual mind[574] can never recognize wisdom.[575] Thoughts always need an object, hence the dualistic mind is forever bound to know, understand, and function within the confines of a fundamental subject-object dichotomy. Wisdom is beyond thoughts, beyond the subject-object dichotomy, beyond the grasp of dualistic mind. As Śāntideva said in the 9th chapter:[576]

> Since the ultimate is not within the reach of intellect,
> The intellect must be described as the relative.

> don dam blo yi spyod yul min
> blo ni kun rdzob yin par brjod

Buddha Nature and its Qualities

All sentient beings are endowed with the perfect buddha nature. The infinite qualities of the perfectly enlightened Buddha, such as knowledge-wisdom,[577] love-compassion,[578] and sheltering power[579] are completely present in the essence of the mind of all sentient beings. The enlightened basis with which every being is endowed has many names, such as buddha nature, essence of mind,[580] profound emptiness, non-conceptual wisdom, primordial purity[581] and so forth.

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[573] shes rab pho rol tu phyin pa

[574] sems

[575] ye shes

[576] Khenpo Kunpal comments: "**Since the absolute**, the natural state of things, is beyond all extremes—of 'existence', of 'non-existence', of 'both existence and non-existence', and of 'neither existence nor non-existence'—it **is not within the reach of the intellect**. Consequently, **the intellect** and verbal expressions conceptualizing (positions) such as 'existence' and 'non-existence' **must be described as being the relative** and therefore not as being the absolute" [dngos po'i gnas tshul **don dam** pa ni yod pa dang med pa dang gnyis ka dang gnyis min kyi mtha' kun dang bral bas na **blo yi spyod yul min** te yod med la sogs par rtog pa'i **blo** dang brjod pa'i sgra ni **kun rdzob yin par brjod** kyi don dam pa ma yin pa'i phyir ro]. See *kun dpal 'grel pa (si khron mi rigs edition)* pages 621-622.

[577] mkhyen pa'i ye shes

[578] brtse ba'i thugs rje

[579] skyob pa'i nus stobs

[580] sems kyi ngo bo

[581] ka dag

This enlightened basis is also called the ground.[582] Every being is primordially endowed with this ground. All enlightened qualities are unchangingly present in the buddha nature of all beings from a tiny insect up to a perfectly enlightened buddha. No being is ever separated from its buddha nature, not even for a single instant.

Through the power of delusion,[583] ego-clinging,[584] obscurations,[585] habitual patterns,[586] and karma, the enlightened qualities are not manifest but remain hidden. Ego-clinging collapses, and enlightened qualities gradually manifest as a practitioner of Buddha's teachings develops a virtuous mind, gathers the two accumulations, and purifies the two obscurations.

Enlightenment is only possible because all beings are primordially endowed with the buddha nature. The practice of the dharma can lead to enlightenment for this reason alone. The very nature of every being is wisdom and compassion. A deluded mind, bound by ignorance and ego-clinging, is not abiding in accordance with the wisdom of its own essence, the buddha nature. Nor is a mind suffused with anger and hatred in accord with the compassion that is its very essence.

Certain things, such as light and darkness, cannot exist simultaneously[587] and are thus exclusive of one another.[588] For example, a person cannot be loosely relaxed and yet tense and uptight at the same time. The more people are able to let go of fixations and attachments, the more they will experience relaxation and the happiness that follows. This is because when fixations and attachments loosen up, the peaceful, blissful, and compassionate qualities of the buddha nature are finally able to begin shining through.

All beings naturally tend to strive for happiness because their very nature, the buddha nature, is itself endowed with happiness. However, beings lack the knowledge with which to uncover this nature. All beings want to attain a level of peace for themselves because their nature, the buddha, is peaceful. All beings dislike pain and suffering because their nature, the buddha nature, is itself free from suffering. Unfortunately, beings are generally unaware of this.

The Buddha Nature: Ground, Path, and Fruition

All beings have as the essence of their minds the perfect state of peace and happiness. That state is empty, cognizant, and free from all fixation. It is naturally-existing wisdom,[589] endowed with all enlightened qualities. The more a person can let go of

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582 gzhi

583 'khrul pa

584 bdag 'dzin

585 sgrib pa

586 bag chags

587 lhan cig mi gnas 'gal

588 phan tshun spong 'gal

589 rang byung ye shes

fixations and attachments, the more the qualities of that person's enlightened essence are able to manifest. Although all beings already possess this enlightened ground, sentient beings, being lost in the delusion of saṃsāra, are utterly unaware of their own perfect essence.

The teachings of the Buddha show us how we can reconnect with the Buddha within and so gain enlightenment. This is the path. If we want to reach enlightenment, from the very beginning of our journey we must strive to develop the precious bodhicitta. Once we are totally free from fixations, and the natural state of the buddha nature has been completely actualized, we have attained enlightenment. We have become buddhas. That is the fruition.

A good example describes the relationship between sentient beings and the buddha nature at the time of the path. The buddha nature is likened to the sun; ego-clinging, delusion, fixations, attachments, and obscurations are like clouds covering the sun. To the degree that clouds fade away, to that degree will the sun's brilliance naturally shine forth. The sun itself is always present, whether or not it is covered or obscured.

Likewise, the buddha nature is always present, regardless of whether it is obscured or not. However, in the general experience of sentient beings it is as though they are cut off from the buddha nature. In the case of practitioners, on the other hand, they sometimes come into contact with the buddha nature and sometimes lose it. This is the experience of delusion on the one hand and of glimpses of enlightenment on the other. In the end, the process of uncovering the buddha nature comes down to letting go of fixations. It is fixation which solidifies the cloud banks of obscuration; letting go of fixation reveals the sun of buddha nature.

Because this buddha nature is already perfectly present in the essence of the mind of every sentient being, the wish and commitment, "I will free all sentient beings from their suffering and establish them on the level of perfect enlightenment," is in accord with the true potential of every being. If beings lacked the buddha nature, bodhicitta would be totally meaningless, mere wishful thinking without any inherent basis in the individual.

Developing the bodhicitta of aspiration and of application is still considered relative bodhicitta. Once we begin to get glimpses of our buddha nature, our primordially pure essence,[590] we begin to realize absolute bodhicitta. At the time when the buddha nature has been fully revealed, we will have reached perfect enlightenment; we will have reached the fruition.

All of saṃsāra, nirvāṇa, and the path to perfect enlightenment must be understood within the framework of ground, path, and fruition. The buddha nature is called the ground or basis. This is the primordial buddha, endowed with all qualities and devoid of all defects. Unaware of this essence, beings live their lives in delusion. The teachings of the Buddha show the way out of this delusion; they teach beings how to reconnect

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590 ngo bo ye dag

with their buddha nature. This is the path. Once this buddha nature has been completely realized, one is a fully awakened buddha. This state is called the fruition.

The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra teaches us how to follow the path to enlightenment. It teaches us how to develop bodhicitta and how to practice the six transcendental perfections. It teaches us how to realize the view[591] of buddha nature and how to let this view mature into complete enlightenment.

Buddha nature, 'the enlightened essence',[592] is also called, among many other names, 'the root of buddha',[593] 'the pure essence, the core of buddha',[594] or 'the heart-drop of buddha'.[595] Buddha nature actually means 'the real buddha'.[596] The term buddha nature indicates that all of us sentient beings are endowed with the real buddha within. This true buddha is no different from your own mind; in fact, it is your mind's true essence.

This internal buddha is the ground. When fully realized, this ground is the fruition. Between the ground and the fruition there is not the slightest difference. The ground is the true and real buddha, endowed with all qualities and devoid of all defects. Due to our delusion we are not aware of this true buddha within us. We must embark on the path to eliminate our delusion. The teachings of the Buddha are the perfect remedy to remove delusion and lead us to our true nature.

On the path we learn methods for removing obscurations, for gathering the accumulation of merit and the accumulation of wisdom. We learn how to recognize our buddha nature in the ninth chapter of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra and how to let this recognition ripen into full realization. This is the framework in which to understand 'Entering the Conduct of the Bodhisattvas'.

Until we reach the ultimate fruition, the dharma is our true refuge, since it is the dharma that teaches us how to attain enlightenment. If from the very beginning you direct your mind to attaining perfect enlightenment, your mind will open up. As bodhicitta develops in your mind, your delusion will gradually fall away, and the genuine view of the buddha nature will begin to dawn. Eventually, you will reach the ultimate fruition, perfect enlightenment.

Delusion[597] means to be mistaken in your mind.[598] If you see a piece of rope and think it is a snake you are mistaken, but your mistaken perception stirs up anger and

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591 lta ba

592 bde bar gshegs pa'i snying po; skr. sugatagarbha

593 sangs rgyas kyi rtsa ba

594 sangs rgyas kyi snying gi dvangs ma

595 sangs rgyas kyi snying gi thig le

596 sangs rgyas kyi dgnos / sangs rgyas dngos ma

597 'khrul pa

598 sems nor ba tsam gyis

fear. These afflictions disappear the moment your mistaken perception collapses, and you clearly see the rope for what it is, just a rope.

The collapse of delusion is related to the accumulation of merit and the accumulation of wisdom. Merit has the power to pacify your negative thoughts, afflictions, habitual patterns, and to transform your negative karma. The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra teaches many methods for gathering merit such as taking refuge, presenting prostrations, offering confessions, and so forth. The accumulation of merit leads to the dawning of wisdom.

The idea of purifying your mind of delusion does not imply that your mind has somehow become dirty and therefore must be cleaned. Do not think of your mind as dirty, but rather think that your mind is mistaken and deluded. Once your error is pointed out you will realize the truth. After someone shows you that the rope is just a rope and not a snake, you see it as it actually is. You have realized the truth about the rope. That is what the phrases 'delusion has collapsed' or 'obscuration has been purified' mean. When realization dawns, obscurations vanish. Since you have realized the truth, your mistaken view has ceased.

First, practitioners must gain a theoretical understanding[599] of the true nature of reality. Next, they must gain direct experience,[600] and eventually they will reach true realization.[601] Only then will delusion truly and permanently collapse. Mere theoretical understanding does not lead to the collapse of delusion.

Entering the Bodhisattva Path

Within the Mahāyāna system, even for the most gifted practitioners such as Buddha Śākyamuni, traversing the path to complete and perfect enlightenment takes a minimum of three incalculable aeons, an incredibly long time-span. A bodhisattva, however, is not at all discouraged by the time-span, the difficulties, hardships, and sacrifices that must be endured. Bodhisattva means 'courageous being'. Khenpo Kunpal describes the bodhisattva in the following way:[602] "Bodhisattva means a hero whose mind does not shy away from accomplishing enlightenment, through developing supreme bodhicitta as the motivation and through endeavoring in the practice of the six transcendental perfections as the application."

If one lacks the courage of a bodhisattva, one cannot become a perfectly enlightened buddha. A bodhisattva is a fearless hero. Though Buddha Śākyamuni taught the way of the bodhisattva to his students, many preferred not to aim for buddhahood but rather aspired to become arhats, to attain merely a state of peaceful cessation of saṃsāra's suffering.

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599 go ba

600 myong ba

601 rtogs pa

602 See text section 158

The Mahāyāna practitioner is aware that he has already been circling in saṃsāra since time without beginning and that he will continue to circle endlessly if he does not attain enlightenment. When one compares three incalculable aeons with the endlessness of saṃsāra, three incalculable aeons seem only as long as three days in an ordinary human being's lifetime.

Once bodhisattvas have reached the first bodhisattva level, the path of seeing,[603] they can easily handle any situation. Starting out on the path of accumulation and the path of application, a beginning bodhisattva might at times perceive the journey as difficult. Therefore, at the beginning, bodhisattvas are advised to stay close to their teachers and mingle only with good friends who support their quest for enlightenment.

When reaching the first bodhisattva level, bodhisattvas become true heroic beings and will never again be so discouraged as to deviate from the bodhisattva path. Before attaining the first bodhisattva level, a bodhisattva could still possibly stray from the path due to the influence of negative circumstances or negative friends. Therefore, relying on a true master is extremely crucial until attaining at least the first bodhisattva level.

If a beginner feels the dharma is too difficult to practice, this is a sure sign of not yet understanding the main points of the teaching. Once a beginning bodhisattva has gained a profound understanding of the main points of the dharma, he will have the confidence that he will be able to proceed on the blissful path of bodhicitta to the level of unexcelled buddhahood. The more one fully understands and practices the dharma, the less will one fear the difficulties of life; negative as well as positive situations will have less power to influence us.

Ordinary persons with no knowledge of the dharma always experience difficulties and hardships in their lives without knowing how to handle them. Instead of being intimidated by the enormous time-span required to reach complete enlightenment, one should rather be frightened by the unending suffering that lies in wait if one fails to practice the dharma at all. Without the dharma, freedom from suffering can never be attained, and there will be no chance of ever reaching enlightenment.

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[603] The bodhisattva traverses the ten bodhisattva levels [sa bcu; skr. daśabhūmi] and the five paths [lam lnga; skr. pañcamārga] toward enlightenment. The five paths are: 1) the path of accumulation [tshogs lam; skr. sambhāra-mārga], 2) the path of application [sbyor lam; skr. prayoga-mārga], 3) the path of seeing [mthon lam; skr. darśana-mārga], 4) the path of meditation [sgom lam; skr. bhāvanā-mārga] and 5) the path of no more learning [mi slob pa'i lam; skr. aśaikṣa-mārga]. The first four are subsumed as the path of learning [slob pa'i lam]. The first bodhisattva level is attained when reaching the third path, the path of seeing.

The ten bodhisattva levels are: 1) Joyful [rab tu dga' ba; skr. pramuditā], 2) Immaculate [dri ma med pa; skr. vimalā], 3) Illuminating ['od byed pa; skr. prabhākarī], 4) Radiant ['od 'phro ba; skr. arcṣmatī], 5) Difficult to Conquer [sbyang dka' ba; skr. sudurjayā], 6) Manifest [mngon du gyur pa; skr. abhimukhī], 7) Far-Reaching [ring du song ba; skr. duraṅgamā], 8) Unmoving [mi g.yo ba; skr. acalā], 9) Excellent Intelligence [legs pa'i blo gros; skr. sādhumatī] and 10) Cloud of Dharma [chos kyi sprin; dharma-meghā].

Śāntideva and the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra

The vast array of teachings that the Buddha himself presented are called 'the direct words of the Buddha'.[604] The words of the Buddha have the hallmark of being true[605] and beneficial.[606] The recorded volumes of Buddha's words are so numerous and vast that, unless one is a great scholar, reading, studying, and understanding them all in one lifetime is virtually impossible. Therefore, Śāntideva extracted the most important points regarding the practice of the bodhisattvas from the entirety of the Buddha's vast teaching and compiled this treatise,[607] 'Entering the Conduct of the Bodhisattvas'. The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is classified as 'a treatise that has gathered what was scattered',[608] as well as 'a treatise on the practice of meditation'.[609]

The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra represents the three types of genuine treatises[610] in one text: 'a treatise that is meaningful',[611] 'a treatise that leads to the overcoming of suffering',[612] and 'a treatise concerned with the application of practice'.[613]

The word 'treatise' translates the Sanskrit word śāstra, which is derived from śāsti, to overcome,[614] and from trāyate, to protect.[615] A true Buddhist treatise must possess the two qualities of overcoming and protecting. It must teach how to overcome the five afflictions of attachment, aversion, ignorance, arrogance, and jealousy, and thus protect one from the causes leading to rebirth in the three lower realms.

The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra owes its great influence and power to the fact that Śāntideva was an enlightened and accomplished master. The son of an Indian king, he renounced the throne in his youth due to a visionary experience of the bodhisattva of wisdom, Mañjuśrī, and entered the great Buddhist monastery of Nālandā, where he studied and practiced the tripiṭaka, the scriptures of sūtra, vinaya, and abhidharma with his teacher, Jayadeva. Śāntideva met the Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī in various visions and received many teachings from him. To summarize his vast knowledge of the buddha dharma, he composed three books: the Śikṣā-samuccaya, the Sūtra-samuccaya, and the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra.

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[604] sangs rgyas kyi bka'

[605] bden pa

[606] phan 'dogs pa

[607] bstan bcos; skr. śāstra

[608] 'thor ba sdud pa'i bstan bcos

[609] sgrub pa nyam len gyi bstan bcos

[610] bstan bcos yang dag gsum

[611] don dang ldan pa'i bstan bcos

[612] sdug bsngal spong ba'i bstan bcos

[613] sgrub pa lhur len pa'i bstan bcos

[614] 'chos

[615] skyob

Śāntideva composed the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra as his personal meditation manual,[616] his daily recitation text.[617] In the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra he condensed all the knowledge and wisdom he had gained by studying and practicing. Therefore, the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is also a 'record for his personal recollection',[618] a mnemonic poem composed so that he himself could remember all he had learned and studied. He wrote this text mainly so he could repeatedly cultivate the motivation of bodhicitta and the practice of the six transcendental perfections. Śāntideva kept all his compositions secret, hiding them in the rafters of his room at the Nālandā monastery.

Outwardly, he gave the impression of being utterly disinterested in any scholastic studies or monastic duties. He spent his days eating, wandering around and sleeping. His fellow monks felt that he was not worthy to live in their community and planned to expel him. Considering him an unlearned fool, they conspired to force him to give a public recitation of the scriptures, hoping that he might flee Nālandā to avoid embarrassment.

To everyone's surprise, Śāntideva accepted the challenge and recited the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra in front of all the great scholars of Nālandā. Everyone was stunned, and all were moved to heartfelt devotion during the course of his recital. When he came to a particular verse from the wisdom chapter that expresses the most profound view of all the Buddhist teachings, he miraculously levitated from his throne and vanished into the sky, while the audience continued to hear his voice resounding from above until the end of the recital.

The scholars within the audience recorded his words from memory, composing texts of varying lengths. Later, to clarify their doubts about the length of the text, they searched for Śāntideva and requested him to decide which was the authentic version of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. At the same time, Śāntideva alerted the scholars to the existence of his other writings, still hidden in the rafters of his old room at Nālandā.

The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra teaches the actual methods for journeying toward enlightenment on the path of the bodhisattva, just as Śāntideva himself practiced them. In this way the text reflects Śāntideva's own personal practice. His life story tells us that he had kept his knowledge of the way of the bodhisattva secret throughout his many years of practice. Thus, it is an eminently practical text written by a great master for all dharma practitioners, both those of his time and of the future. Ordinary scholastic works written by intellectuals can never approach the powerful impact and blessing of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra.

Even until the present day, no treatise ever written on the way of the bodhisattva, neither in India, Tibet, nor elsewhere, can compare to the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. It is said that in India alone more than one hundred commentaries were written on the

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616 sgrub pa nyams len gyi bstan bcos

617 kha 'don

618 mi brjed pa'i dran tho

Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, of which only ten are still in existence in their Tibetan translations.

Khenpo Chöga's Advice on the Study of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra

Many renowned Tibetan scholars and masters wrote commentaries on this book. To this day, scholars and practitioners in Tibet maintain an unbroken lineage of the study and practice of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. It is the most effective and popular treatise on the practice of bodhicitta.

Whoever intends to study the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra with any teacher should initially pose a few questions to his new teacher in a tactful and polite manner. First, ask from whom he received the teachings on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. Next, ask how often and for how long he received teachings on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. Then ask how many times and how much he has read, studied, and practiced the teachings of the text. Finally, ask whether he has truly understood the entire text or if he still has unresolved questions.

If your teacher has studied and practiced the teachings of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra under qualified masters, this will inspire in you faith and trust. If your teacher cannot answer these questions in a way that satisfies you, you should skillfully avoid requesting teachings from him.

You have to read the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra and Khenpo Kunpal's commentary again and again. Every time you read it and ponder the meaning, you will gain some new insight. Unlike reading a magazine where one time through is enough, you need to read and study this text many times to begin to penetrate its profound meaning. The more you study it, the more profound and vast will your understanding become. In the best case, a practitioner should study this text one or two hundred times. You should aim to achieve a degree of understanding whereby the text and its meaning are indelibly engraved in your mind.

When I was studying at Śrī Siṃha Shedra, I lived in a cave above the valley. At the beginning of my studies, I learned the root text of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra by heart. I got up every morning at 5 a.m. and for two hours I read out loud all the texts I had to learn by heart. The teachings at the shedra began at 8 a.m. and continued until 5 p.m. In the morning, on the way down to the shedra, I would recite half of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra by heart, and in the evening, on the way up to my cave, I would recite the rest of the text. Back in the cave I would practice meditation until late at night. In this way I recited the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra for two years every day. It is my experience that the early morning hours are most suited to learn texts by heart.

For students who did not grow up in a Buddhist environment such as the Śrī Siṃha Shedra, it is difficult to study all the important sūtras and textbooks. I truly believe that by focusing on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra and Khenpo Kunpal's commentary alone and making this text part of your life, in conjunction with your yidam practice, you will become a true scholar and practitioner.

I further believe that, in this day and age, 'Khenpo Kunpal's commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra', the 'Life Story and Songs of Milarepa', and Paltrül Rinpoche's 'Words of My Prefect Teacher' are all the reading and studying a practitioner of the Nyingmapa School needs. If you do not aspire to become a khenpo, a preceptor of the monastic tradition, or a teacher of sūtra and tantra, but aim to become an excellent practitioner of the dharma, then these three books and the oral meditation instructions of your root guru are all you need. Following this advice, you are neither in danger of going astray into stupid meditation nor of becoming a mere scholastic intellectual.

Therefore, read the root text and Khenpo Kunpal's commentary again and again, allowing fresh insights to continually ripen in your mind. When reading the root text, you will inevitably come to sections you do not fully comprehend, about which you are uncertain. Let these difficult passages remain with you, and an understanding or insight may surface in your mind when you least expect it, perhaps while eating, while taking a walk, or while talking to a friend. Such insight comes about through the blessings of the Buddha. Through the blessing of the Buddha, insight into the sublime dharma arises in the minds of beings. When such an insight arises, remember it again and again, allowing it to become part of your being. Also, perceive any new insight that you gain to be nothing other than the Buddha's blessing.

This is the genuine technique by which you may become a true scholar. If you have some kind of understanding on your first reading of the text and you think that your initial insight is sufficient, you are really only deluding yourself. It would be of great benefit if you could truly try to read this text one hundred times. Then your understanding will definitely deepen.

Such intense study and meditation on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra will affect your whole being. Slowly ego-clinging will lessen and your mind will open up. Gradually the qualities of bodhicitta will manifest in your mind. Many practitioners in Tibet defeated their pride, arrogance, jealousy, attachment, and aggression through the subtle workings of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. You should always strive to bring study and meditation together.

If you do not understand certain passages in the text, even upon intense reflection, you must ask your teacher. If you truly want to internalize the teachings of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, you do need a qualified teacher.[619] Only through the guidance of a real master will you be able to transform yourself from an ordinary worldly person into an exalted being who can truly help others.

When you read this text or listen to teachings on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, it is of paramount importance to develop respect toward the teacher, his lineage, and the teaching of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra itself. If you receive teachings from a qualified master but do not respect him as your teacher, the teaching cannot benefit you.

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619 mtshan ldan gyi bla ma

Buddha's cousin Devadatta had known the Buddha all his life and had received his teachings, but his jealousy kept him from gaining any benefit. Likewise, Buddha's cousin Sunakṣatra[620] served the Buddha for twenty-five years as his attendant and knew all his teachings, but he was unable to see any good qualities in the Buddha.

In the best case your teacher will be a qualified master, his teaching a perfect teaching[621] like the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, and you will regard him with perfect faith and devotion[622] as the Buddha in person. In such a case you will realize the teachings very quickly and attain perfect results. Even if your teacher is not a perfect master, if his teachings and lineage are perfect, and you regard him as your teacher with heartfelt respect, you will benefit greatly from his teaching. In case your master is not qualified, however, and if his teachings also are not properly presented, then even if you believe in him and his teachings, you will not benefit very much.

Paltrül Rinpoche said that the followers of his tradition never aim to reach high positions in this life, nor do they seek approval and praise from other people. Likewise, they are not affected by unjust criticism from others. I advise interested students to let the teachings of the Great Perfection infuse their point of view and to let the teachings of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra guide their conduct.[623]

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620 legs pa'i skar ma

621 gdams ngag tshad ldan

622 yid ches tshad ldan

623 The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra includes all the important teachings on view, meditation and conduct of the Mahāyāna path. Those students who want to go into further details should study the most important manual on view, meditation, conduct and fruition: The most important manuals on Mahāyāna view [lta ba] are the *Prajñā-mūla* [rtsa ba shes rab] by Nāgārjuna [klu sgrub] and the *Madhyamakāvatāra* [dbu ma la 'jug pa] by Candrakirti [zla ba grags pa]. The most important manual on Mahāyāna meditation [sgom] is the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* [mngon rtogs rgyan] by Asaṅga [thogs med]. The most important manual on Mahāyāna conduct [spyod pa] is the *Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra* [spyod 'jug] by Śāntideva [zhi ba lha]. The most important manual on Mahāyāna fruition ['bras bu] is the *Uttara-tantra* [rgyud bla ma] by Asaṅga [thogs med].

Introduction by Tsoknyi Rinpoche

The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra: A Perfect Preparation for Vajrayāna Practice

The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is a text that can greatly benefit any practicing Buddhist. Among the many commentaries that exist on this text in Tibetan, I have personally found Khenpo Kunpal's commentary to be the most practical, containing many key points essential to Buddhist practice. During my education I studied the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra with eminent scholars, and I read Khenpo Kunpal's commentary many times.

The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra teaches the complete Mahāyāna path to enlightenment, including all necessary preliminary, main, and concluding practices. A perfect path in itself, it is also at the same time a perfect support[624] for all practitioners of the Vajrayāna teachings in general. Practitioners learn how to develop the motivation of bodhicitta, as well as how to carry out the application of the six transcendental perfections. They learn how to fuse their practice of bodhicitta and the five first perfections with the sixth perfection, transcendental knowledge.[625]

Buddhism came to Tibet and remained undisturbed for over a thousand years. There Buddhism was so widespread that even lay people naturally grew up with faith in the Buddha, in the law of karma, in past and future lives, in the existence of pure realms or buddha fields, and in the terrible forms of rebirth known as hell realms.

These beliefs were simply part of Tibetan culture. Uneducated Tibetans did not know why they held these beliefs although they did keep them in their hearts. Therefore, it was relatively easy for Buddhist masters to teach the dharma in the classical format, beginning with the preliminary practices[626] and continuing on to advanced meditation.

Buddhism is now increasingly being taught to foreign students from a great variety of cultural backgrounds. Concepts such as karma, past and future lives, the six realms of saṃsāra, and so forth are new to them and so require considerable explanation.

I believe that the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is the perfect introduction for Western students to come to a similar understanding and appreciation of Buddhism as have people who have been raised in a Buddhist culture. Students who have studied and practiced the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra for some time under a qualified teacher will have a very stable Mahāyāna foundation for their Vajrayāna practice. Thus, the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is a perfect preliminary practice for Vajrayāna.

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624 lam stegs

625 shes rab pha rol tu phyin pa

626 sngon 'gro

The Blessings of the Natural State

The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra summarizes the teachings of the Buddha, teachings that are unmistaken and without error. These teachings do not express an opinion but are rather words of truth[627] that accord with the law of dharmatā,[628] the natural state of reality. The Buddha did not invent the truth of the natural state; he realized his own buddha nature and thus was able to teach this realization to others.

Whoever reads, studies, or comes into contact with such teachings will automatically be exposed to the blessings of the natural state of reality through the words of the teachings, even without coming into direct contact with a teacher. The more the reader's mind is open and devoted, the more will the blessings of the natural state be received. This transfer of blessings does not depend on a teacher but comes from the natural state of reality itself.

Blessings of the Lineage

In addition to the blessings of the natural state of reality, there are also the blessings of the lineage of masters. The blessings of the lineage are always transmitted from master to student. Ideally, students who have access to a personal teacher should first receive the reading transmission[629] for the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. Then they should receive an extensive commentary on the text from a qualified teacher. Together with the teachings on the ninth chapter, which is the chapter on transcendental knowledge, students should at best receive the 'pointing out instruction' from an authentic master in order to facilitate direct recognition of the buddha nature.

The Practices of Skillful Means and Transcendental Knowledge

The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is structured around practices of skillful means and transcendental knowledge. The ninth chapter teaches how to practice wisdom, the recognition of the buddha nature. All the other chapters teach the practices of skillful means,[630] leading to the particular results that arise from skillful means.[631] The perfection of transcendental knowledge arises from the skillful method of meditation, as well as from all the other skillful-means-based practices of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. Therefore, transcendental knowledge is called 'knowledge that arises from skillful means'.[632] This transcendental knowledge is itself the recognition of profound emptiness, the buddha nature.

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627 bden par smra ba

628 chos nyid kyi khrims

629 lung

630 thabs

631 thabs byung

632 thabs las byung ba'i shes rab

Once buddha nature is recognized, students can bring that recognition into their practice of the bodhicitta motivation and of the first five perfections. Only then will the practice of these perfections be 'transcendental'. Unless their practice is embraced with recognition of the buddha nature, the students will not be able to reach perfect enlightenment.[633]

The practices of generosity, discipline, patience, diligence, and meditation are considered practices of skillful means, while transcendental knowledge, the recognition of the buddha nature, is considered to be the practice of knowledge.[634] A practitioner who aspires to traverse swiftly the paths and levels should always practice the unity of skillful means and transcendental knowledge.

Some teachers guide their students for a long time through skillful means practices alone, the traditional sūtra approach. Students first practice relative bodhicitta, the six perfections, and the various methods to gather merit. They receive theoretical teachings on the chapter of transcendental knowledge, on the view of profound emptiness. Practicing meditation for many years, they refine their minds until at some point in time insight into profound emptiness naturally arises out of their meditation practice.

Another tradition introduces qualified students from the very beginning to the view of profound emptiness in conjunction with meditation practice. In this approach, the master starts out by giving students the 'pointing out instruction', introducing them directly to their buddha nature. Through the 'pointing out instruction' the students become able to practice the unity of skillful means and transcendental knowledge.

Students with modern education can easily understand theoretical teachings on transcendental knowledge. However, such a scholastic approach does not readily bring about the genuine recognition of the buddha nature, as buddha nature is beyond theoretical understanding. The 'pointing out instruction' from an authentic master is a direct and experiential introduction to the buddha nature.

Present day students find it more difficult to understand the reasons for practicing the teachings on skillful means. They do not easily accept and appreciate teachings on devotion, compassion and renunciation. Nowadays, many people need in-depth teachings on why and how to gather the accumulations of merit. They must be taught in great detail how wisdom[635] and merit[636] enhance one another.

For modern people, teachings on karma, i.e., the law of cause and effect, are not so easy to accept. Traditional Tibetans absorb these teachings without great reflection, having been brought up in a Buddhist culture. Tibetans who have not received a modern education find the teachings on wisdom or transcendental knowledge more

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633 rdzogs byang

634 shes rab

635 ye shes

636 bsod nams

difficult to understand. The average Tibetan would prefer practices of accumulating merit to the actual practice of wisdom. They assume that teachings on wisdom and transcendental knowledge are primarily meant for monks and lamas, not for lay practitioners.

Actually, if practiced without recognition of buddha nature, skillful-means methods for accumulating merit lead very slowly to the dawning of wisdom or transcendental knowledge. On the other hand, by practicing wisdom alone, one's practice might not flourish, being in danger of becoming dry and lifeless, lacking the juice of devotion, compassion, and bodhicitta. Wisdom is like fire, easily enhanced by the fuel of skillful means. The swiftest way to enlightenment is unifying the practice of transcendental knowledge with the practices of skillful means.

Practitioners in the sūtra tradition apply skillful-means methods to come to the recognition of transcendental knowledge. In the tradition of Dzogpa Chenpo, the Great Perfection,[637] the master introduces the student directly to wisdom, to transcendental knowledge. From that point onward the student uses skillful-means methods as an enhancement for wisdom.

For any practitioner of the Great Perfection or Mahāmudra, this text is a treasure trove of enhancement techniques. Practitioners of the Great Perfection and Mahāmudra who do not know how to enhance their meditation on the view by mingling it with skillful-means methods, such as those taught in the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, will unfortunately fail to swiftly traverse the paths and levels.

Bodhicitta, the Entrance to Mahāyāna

The entry way to the Mahāyāna teachings is the precious bodhicitta. The practice of bodhicitta guarantees that practitioners are following the genuine Mahāyāna path. The precious bodhicitta will transform all of their actions into an unceasing and inexhaustible stream of virtue and merit.

Maintaining the bodhicitta attitude is of utmost importance when receiving the reading transmission and explanations on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, as well as on Khenpo Kunpal's commentary. You should think, "I will receive these teachings and transmissions in order to free all sentient beings from suffering and to establish them on the level of complete enlightenment." Listening to the teachings in this manner will create a powerful momentum of virtue and blessing that can never be lost. A practitioner who maintains this motivation when receiving the teachings or when practicing them will greatly benefit many sentient beings.

Bring to mind that all buddhas of past, present, and future travel the Mahāyāna path to enlightenment. All buddhas practice bodhicitta and the six transcendental perfections. They all reach enlightenment by gathering the accumulations of merit and wisdom and by purifying the two obscurations, the obscurations of affliction and

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[637] rdzogs pa chen po

obscurations of cognition. The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra and Khenpo Kunpal's commentary teach in great detail how to practice exactly like the buddhas of past, present, and future. Understand the preciousness of the teachings and the unique opportunity that we all now have to study and practice them.

Blessing

Buddha Śākyamuni discovered a universal truth, which he called 'the precious dharma'. He taught this dharma to his students. The dharma that Buddha Śākyamuni taught is the same dharma taught by all the buddhas of the past to their students. Furthermore, all the buddhas of the future will teach exactly that very same dharma. When Buddha Śākyamuni taught the dharma, the blessing of his realized mind was transmitted along with the words of his teachings. That blessing caused realization to dawn in the minds of his students. Once the students gained genuine realization, they in turn transmitted the same blessing and dharma teachings to their students.

In this manner Buddha Śākyamuni's immaculate dharma has been handed down from teacher to student in an uninterrupted lineage. This is a most important point. The lineage must be uninterrupted. Only then will the transmission of genuine teachings as well as the transmission of blessings be guaranteed. All the lineage masters must be qualified to uphold the lineage and must have received authorization from their own masters to pass on the teachings. Such a lineage is compared to immaculate pearls on a strand of silk. For as long as the lineage remains intact, the blessings and realization will be handed down from generation to generation.

Any person who sincerely wants to study and practice these teachings should connect to this lineage of blessings and realization. You should make every effort to receive the reading transmission for the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra as well as teachings on it from a qualified master of the Buddhist lineage. If that is not possible, visualize that Buddha Śākyamuni, surrounded by the bodhisattvas, is present in the space before you. While studying the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, imagine that you directly receive all the teachings given in it from Buddha personally. As Buddha's wisdom body[638] is bound neither by time nor by proximity, it is certain that you will receive his blessing. Thus, the study and practice of this text will influence your mind to a profound degree.

The blessings of the lineage are transmitted only from master to student. The transmission is from the enlightened mind of a qualified master to the mind of the student. The full force of the blessings of the lineage cannot be transmitted through a book, however sacred it may be. It relies on our connection to the wisdom body of the Buddha and to the teacher.

The ultimate point of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is to recognize the view of emptiness and to merge this view with one's practice of bodhicitta and of the six transcendental perfections. Studying such a book without the blessings of the lineage,

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638 ye shes kyi sku

a reader who has devotion to the Buddha can still receive the Buddha's blessings, since all the teachings of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra are in fact words of truth. In addition, an intellectual understanding of the view might also be obtained through such study.

The genuine recognition of the view, however, is only possible through the blessings of an authentic lineage master. As the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is a treatise for meditation practice, a committed and serious student of Buddhism must at some point seek out a qualified master and receive the pointing out instruction according to the teachings of the Great Perfection or Mahāmudra.

That is the tradition maintained in the lineage of Paltrül Rinpoche, Khenpo Kunpal, and the teachers from the Śrī Siṃha Shedra of Dzogchen Monastery. The fusion of sūtra and Vajrayāna, of study and meditation practice, has long been the special feature of the Śrī Siṃha Shedra. Students at Śrī Siṃha study the treatises and also receive pointing out instructions from qualified meditation masters. They maintain the tradition of uniting the practices of studying, contemplating, and meditating.

Realization

The ninth chapter of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra teaches transcendental knowledge, the view of profound emptiness. The ultimate view is taught in stanza 34 of the ninth chapter:[639]

> When neither an 'entity' nor a 'non-entity'
> Remains before the mind,
> At that point, since there is no other position,
> It rests in utter peace, without any conceptualizing.
>
> gang tshe dngos dang dngos med dag
> blo yi mdun na mi gnas pa
> de tshe rnam pa gzhan med pas

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639 Khenpo Kunpal explains: "**When neither a** (truly existing) '**entity**', something that must be negated, **nor a** (truly existing) '**non-entity**', the negation thereof, **remains before the mind** or within the mind's reach, **at that point**, **since there is no other position** of something truly existing such as 'both existence and non-existence' and 'neither existence nor non-existence', **without any** reference point of **conceptualizing** 'it is empty' or 'it is not empty', all elaborations (of the mind) **rest in utter peace**. It is (a state of) equanimity, which is like the center of space, inexpressible and inconceivable, perfectly revealed only by one's individual awareness wisdom" [**gang** gi **tshe** dgag bya **dngos** po **dang** de bkag pa'i **dngos med** gnyis po **dag** gang yang **blo yi mdun** nam spyod yul **na mi gnas pa de** yi **tshe** de las gzhan gnyis ka dang gnyis min la sogs pa bden par grub pa'i **rnam pa gzhan med pas** na stong ngo mi stong ngo la sogs pa'i **dmigs** pa'i gtad so ma lus **pa med par** spros pa ma lus pa **rab tu zhi** ba yin te so so rang rig pa'i ye shes tsam gyis rab tu phye ba smra bsam brjod du med pa nam mkha'i dkyil lta bu mnyam pa nyid do]. *kun dpal 'grel pa (si khron mi rigs edition)*, pages 649-650. For further details on this stanza see, *Altruism and Reality*, pages 20-22.

dmigs pa med par rab tu zhi

Bodhisattvas practice transcendental knowledge and skillful means as an inseparable unity. Maintaining the view of emptiness, they practice bodhicitta as they carry out the five remaining transcendental perfections. From the first bodhisattva level onward, all activities of the perfect bodhisattva are embraced by transcendental knowledge, by wisdom.

Once the view has been recognized, the various practices of skillful means greatly enhance realization. The teaching of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is beneficial for enabling beginners to recognize the view. It is even more beneficial for advanced practitioners since it enhances their practice of the view through the teachings on skillful means. The practice of skillful means alone does not lead to realization; neither does the practice of transcendental knowledge by itself lead to enlightenment. Only the unity of both practices, of transcendental knowledge and skillful means, will lead to perfect enlightenment.

Conceptual and Non-conceptual Teachings

The dharma includes teachings that would have us rely on the rational mind, the intellect,[640] as well as teachings through which we transcend the rational.[641] The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra explains the first of these, the dharma of the rational mind, in a most wonderful manner. Without suggesting that we either reject or suppress concepts, it instead teaches us how to look at them, how to soften their rough edges, how to make concepts spacious, and how to transform negative thoughts into positive ones.

On the other hand non-conceptual teachings, such as the teachings of the Great Perfection, require that students have the capacity for transcendental knowledge,[642] for faith,[643] for compassion,[644] and for bodhicitta.[645] If all of these qualities come together, students will swiftly recognize the essence of their minds, the buddha nature, the view of profound emptiness. When mind essence is genuinely recognized, the energy[646] of that recognition naturally manifests as qualities such as faith, compassion, and bodhicitta. That level of practice is endowed with vitality, juice, with qualities. When we are able to maintain the recognition of buddha nature, the qualities of buddha nature naturally begin to unfold.

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640 blo gi chos

641 blo dang bral ba'i chos

642 shes rab

643 dad pa

644 snying rje

645 byang sems

646 rtsal

The Cure for Jaded Practitioners

Unfortunately, many who practice the Great Perfection seem to lack that juice, that spiritual vitality. They manifest no signs of faith, compassion, humility, or openness. They seem unable to mingle the recognition of buddha nature with their daily activities. Without being aware of it, such practitioners are actually spending most of their post-meditation[647] time caught up in conceptual thinking. The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is especially helpful for these practitioners, since it teaches them how to deal with concepts and emotions while in the post-meditation state. For most people, it seems to be necessary to have something to do; they find the 'nothing-to-do' approach of the Great Perfection difficult to accept!

A thorough study of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra enables practitioners to intellectually understand the emptiness of all phenomena, to understand that all phenomena are like a dream or an illusion. They come to understand that phenomena appear without truly existing.[648] However, this view remains a mere intellectual understanding.

When students follow up by obtaining teachings on how to directly recognize the true nature of mind, the buddha nature, they will begin to realize the great benefit of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra teachings. This will be particularly true during the post-meditation stage, when engaging in daily activities. Students will arrive at the heartfelt conviction that everything they are experiencing has no more reality than a dream. They will understand that all perception comes about through interdependent arising,[649] which in turn results from karma,[650] causes,[651] and conditions.[652]

I would advise every sincere student of the dharma to practice the teachings of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra in order to lay a stable foundation for practice. At the same time I also strongly recommend receiving teachings on how to directly recognize the true nature of mind from an authentic master, a master of either the Mahāmudra or the Great Perfection traditions. Practitioners of these meditation traditions, who know how to infuse their experience during post-meditation with the mental training and attitude of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, will develop a peaceful[653] and tamed[654] character.

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647 rjes thob

648 bden pa grub pa ma yin

649 rten 'brel

650 las

651 rgyu

652 rkyen

653 zhi ba

654 'dul ba

Ideally, the continuity[655] of the meditation state[656] should pervade all the conceptual activities[657] of post-meditation. Without losing the recognition of the buddha nature, the expression[658] of the buddha nature encounters all situations appropriately.

Cutting Through Moods

Support your meditation practice with a form practice, a practice which includes visualizing a form of the Buddha such as Śākyamuni, Mañjuśrī, Tārā, Avalokiteśvara, or any other. Practitioners should develop the confidence that their chosen meditation deity is identical in essence with their root guru. Only when practicing with heartfelt devotion will the guru's blessings enter into your mind-stream and realization dawn.

Such practice should be done every day, whether or not you are in the 'mood' to practice. Relate every experience to the blessings of your root guru. Especially if you do not feel like practicing or if you are in a bad mood, consider your mood to be the direct blessing of your guru. Your guru is asking you to look into the essence of your mood. Do not hold the view that only positive experiences arise from the guru's blessing.

At times, when you are upset, unhappy, tense, tired, sick, or uninspired, look into the essence of that feeling. Practice the instructions of stanza 11 from the third chapter of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. There, in the practice called 'the cutter',[659] you give your body, your wealth, and all your merit to demons and beasts. You let them eat your flesh and drink your blood:

> My body and likewise my enjoyments,
> And even all my virtue of the three times,
> I surrender without any sense of loss,
> So that I will accomplish the welfare of all beings.
>
> lus dang de bzhin longs spyod dang
> dus gsum dge ba thams cad kyang
> sems can kun gyi don sgrub phyir
> phongs pa med par btang bar bya

Sometimes you may feel very inspired to practice, and you decide to get up early in the morning. When morning comes, however, your inspiration has vanished, and you no longer want to practice. You might feel disappointed that your hope for a nice

[655] mdangs
[656] mnyam bzhag
[657] blo
[658] rtsal
[659] gcod

practice session was not satisfied. Regard this disappointment, this off-mood, as a true blessing of your guru. Realize how feeble your moods are and how much you depend on having your expectations fulfilled.

At that point give up identifying yourself with your experience, with all of your expectations, your moods, and your body. Give it all away to demons and beasts. Simply allow the off-mood to remain as long as it lasts. Do not try to produce any artificially contrived state of meditation. Just remain with the essence, without either affirming good moods or rejecting bad moods.

On other occasions you might be very sick, and everything you experience is tinged with suffering. Again, at that time, simply allow the pain and suffering to be there. Realize that it is only your mind that is experiencing the suffering. Disown your body, disown your experience of suffering and pain. Give it all away to demons and beasts. Apply this method at any time, when you have been insulted and mistreated, when your feelings have been hurt, or when you are upset or angry. These are the opportunities to apply the practice of the six perfections.

Practice your meditation deity every day with the same mindset. Generate the carefree attitude, "It doesn't matter whether I get any results or blessings or not; it doesn't matter if I am happy and inspired or if I am not; it doesn't matter if this practice is useful for me or if it is not; it doesn't even matter if I die today. Whatever happens to me is all right."

Cut through all hopes and fears in this way. Treat all positive and negative experiences in meditation and in your life as being equal. Do not seek out the positive while rejecting the negative. If you disown your experiences in this way and allow them to arise by themselves and to disappear by themselves, if you mingle everything that happens to you with the practice of mind essence, you will quickly traverse the paths and levels.

Entering Into the Stream of Blessing

The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra addresses both our emotions and our ability to reason. Śāntideva's beautiful poetry inspires readers to open their hearts. Slowly reciting, chanting or singing this text is a wonderful way to enter into its flow and spirit. In this way, the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra can confer profound insight and transcendental knowledge upon your mind. This text delights beginners as well as scholars, both new and old practitioners.

Practitioners of the Great Perfection should from time to time recite a few chapters of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. While maintaining the recognition of the buddha nature, they should slowly sing the verses in a melodious tune. The enlightened mind of the Buddha is as vast as space, permeating everything. Buddha's recognition of wisdom is not disrupted even for a single instant, while yogin practitioners, depending upon their degree of development, recognize buddha nature only partially. Reciting or singing the text expands a yogin's mind.

First, make your mind vast and open in a contrived manner, and then mingle this openness with the recognition of buddha nature. In this state, yogins of the Great Perfection should sing or recite the poetry of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra as an enhancement practice. The blessing of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra will enhance any yogin's recognition of buddha nature.

Although genuine yogins are able to chant the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra while maintaining the view, new practitioners who have not yet received teachings on how to recognize buddha nature should chant the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra while cultivating conceptually contrived devotion[660] toward the buddhas and bodhisattvas. They should see the buddhas and bodhisattvas as inseparable from their own root guru and should imagine that the wisdom mind of the buddhas and bodhisattvas is merged with their own dualistic mind. This is a very important point. It is essential to read and study the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra while remaining in a state which is merged with the wisdom field of the buddhas and bodhisattvas.

Applying this instruction will naturally lead to an open, devoted, and compassionate state of mind. The buddhas and bodhisattvas are a supreme object of veneration, endowed with great blessings and healing powers. Opening our minds to that energy, the Buddha's blessings will naturally enter into us, and our minds will be infused with love and compassion.

On the other hand, if you focus your mind on inferior or negative objects and become fascinated by the deeds of great evildoers, their negative and unwholesome energy will enter your mind. Similarly, if you hold in your mind the image of someone who has done you wrong, constantly reinforcing feelings of hurt and aggression, you are totally immersing your mind in negativity.

When you open your mind to the teachings of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, you open up to the enlightened mind of the Buddha, to teachings that accord with the natural state of reality. The blessing power of the Buddha and his teachings will immediately enter your mind, just as your finger becomes wet the moment you dip it into water. As soon as you begin to merge your mind with the wisdom field of the Buddha, you have already received his blessing.

The word 'blessing' carries the meaning of 'power' and 'energy',[661] similar to the way in which the radiance[662] of the sun opens up a lotus flower. 'Blessing' is the energetic capacity,[663] the charisma,[664] to positively influence the thoughts and attitudes of others. 'Power' denotes strength and intensity.[665] The blessing power of Buddha's

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660 blo'i mos sgom

661 nus pa

662 byin rlabs

663 nus pa

664 gzi byin

665 rlabs po che

vajra-body, vajra-speech, and vajra-mind can change our ordinary body, speech, and mind. Our own capacity to receive Buddha's blessing power depends on the strength of our faith, devotion, and diligence.

Motivation

Whether or not your dharma practice is successful, whether or not your practice accords with the genuine dharma, depends entirely on the purity of your motivation.[666] Only if your motivation is utterly pure and altruistic will you be able to reach liberation or enlightenment. When gathering the accumulations there should not be the slightest degree of self-interest. The merest trace of the desire to achieve enlightenment for yourself alone means that you are simply using sentient beings as objects for gaining personal merit. If that is the case, your practice of bodhicitta and the six perfections has not been embraced by transcendental knowledge, as you still maintain selfishness, ego-clinging.

You must honestly examine your mind and search for the true motives of your dharma practice. Are you really motivated by the desire to free all beings from suffering and establish them on the level of enlightenment, or are you striving for your own happiness and well-being? An attitude of hoping to reach enlightenment and happiness for your own benefit can easily arise. This is the thought, "Wouldn't it be nice if I reached enlightenment? Then I would be happy." The moment you detect such a thought in your mind you must transform it. Again and again form the resolve: "I will never rest until all sentient beings have reached enlightenment. Wherever beings may be suffering I want to be reborn among them and help them."

Teachers can easily become proud and think, "People really like the way I teach. I'm really good at what I'm doing." Teachers, on detecting such thoughts within their minds, should immediately correct their motivation and remind themselves, "The dharma should never be taught to impress people and make the teacher look good. My motivation for teaching the dharma is to free all beings from suffering and to establish them on the level of complete enlightenment. May all beings benefit from hearing the teachings of the Buddha. What touches people is the greatness of the dharma. I am only a conduit for the teachings and blessings of the Buddha. That is the reason why I teach the dharma." In this way teachers must constantly be on guard that their motivation for teaching remains pure and altruistic.

Nyoshül Khen Rinpoche, a truly authentic master of the Great Perfection, repeatedly emphasized the importance of maintaining a pure motivation when receiving teachings, when practicing, and when giving instruction in the dharma. Sometimes he would teach me for one hour straight and then interrupt his discourse to say, "Now our motivation has deteriorated. Let's correct it again. For me as a teacher and for you as a student, pure motivation is easy to lose. Our minds quickly become tainted by the

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[666] kun slong

eight worldly concerns.[667] Let's examine our minds and renew our motivation. Let's meditate for ten or twenty minutes on our motivation."

After we scrutinized and corrected our motivation in this manner, he would continue with his teaching. At other times, Khen Rinpoche said that purity of motivation is the ultimate measure, parameter, or plumb-line[668] for dharma practice. If the motivation is genuinely correct, everything you do will be in accordance with the dharma.

Any practitioner of the Great Perfection needs this purity of motivation. For those of highest capacity, compassion and bodhicitta arise naturally as the expression of their recognition of buddha nature. If practitioners do not have this natural compassion at all times, they have no choice but to develop compassion conceptually. You must, for a short while, intentionally contrive compassion, and then mingle it with uncontrived mind essence practice. In this manner, such contrived practices, which actually belong to the post-meditation stage, will evoke the natural qualities of uncontrived meditation, and uncontrived compassion can begin to naturally arise as the expression of the essence. Practicing the Great Perfection with a Hīnayāna motivation does not work; the innate qualities of buddha nature will not manifest unless your mind is infused with Mahāyāna motivation.

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[667] The eight worldly concerns ['jig rten chos brgyad] are: gain [rnyed pa] and loss [ma rnyed pa]; fame [snyan] and disrepute [mi snyan]; praise [bstod pa] and blame [smad pa]; pleasure [bde ba] and pain [mi bde ba].

[668] gnam thig

History of Dzongsar Shedra

History of Dzongsar Shedra in East Tibet[669]

Dzongsar Trashi Lhatse Monastery[670] was founded in 1275[671] by Chögyal Phakpa (1235-1280).[672] Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo[673] (1820-1892) began the systematic teaching of Buddhist philosophy at Dzongsar Monastery. Later, great masters such as Mipham Rinpoche (1846-1912) and Thubten Chökyi Drakpa[674] were also invited to teach at Dzongsar Monastery.

Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo instructed his followers to found a shedra at Dzongsar Monastery in the future. He directed that the shedra[675] be named 'Khamche Shedrup

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669 The history of Dzongsar Monastery and the life story of Khenchen Kunga Wangchuk are based on the following texts: 1) *rdzong gsar lo rgyus*; 2) *rdzong gsar dgon gzhung*; 3) *mkhan po kun dga' dbang phyug gi lo rgyus*; 4) *rdzongs gsar bca' yig* and 5) *mkhyen rab chos kyi 'od zer gyi gsung*. These five texts were kindly provided and explained by Dzongsar Khenpo Khyenrab Wangchuk [rdzong gsar mkhan po mkhyen rab dbang phyug], a student of Khenchen Kunga Wangchuk.

670 Dzongsar Trashi Lhatse Monastery [rdzong gsar bkra shis lha rtse'i dgon pa] is situated, according to present day Chinese administration, in a place called Khamche [khams bye], in the area of Menshö [sman shod sa khul], in Derge district [sde dge rdzong], in the autonomous Tibetan province of Kandze [dkar mdzes bod rigs rang skyong khul], in the state of Sechuan [krung go'i si khron zhing chen].

671 rang byung lnga pa shing phag lo. According to tshig mdzod chen po the monastery was founded in 1253 [rab byung bzhi pa'i chu glang lo].

672 After Chögyal Phakpa [chos rgyal 'phags pa] had founded the monastery, Gang Na Chöje [sgang sna chos rje] became Dzongsar Monastery's dharma-throne-holder. To the present (2003) twenty-four throne-holders [khri rabs] have upheld that post. Later, Ngari Chöje [mnga' ris chos rje] became the second dharma-throne-holder at Dzongsar Monastery, and the current Ngari Chöje is Dzongsar's seventeenth throne-holder [khri bcu bdun]. Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo was the third great master at Dzongsar Monastery. His incarnation was Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodro [rdzong gsar mkhyen brtse chos kyi blo gros]. Presently, the third Dzongsar Khyentse, Thubten Chökyi Gyamtsho [thub bstan chos kyi rgya mtsho], is the head of Dzongsar Monastery.

673 'jam dbyangs mkhyen brtse'i dbang po

674 Thubten Chökyi Drakpa [thub bstan chos kyi grags pa], also known as Minyak Kunzang [mi nyag kun bzang], was a direct student of Paltrül Rinpoche.

675 A shedra [bshad grva], literally 'the section for teaching', is the section of a monastery devoted to study of the five major and minor sciences, primarily Buddhist philosophy. In a major monastery of East Tibet, monks had the opportunity to specialize in ritual practice, meditation practice, administration or scholarly pursuits. Not every monastery in East Tibet had a shedra, but those shedras that were developed followed a very strict curriculum, with a series of texts that were to be studied and mastered in a particular order and within a certain time-frame. More details on the history of different East Tibetan shedras can be found later in the text.

Dargye Ling'.[676] But it was actually Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodro (1893-1959), who, following Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo's instructions, actually founded the shedra in 1918,[677] when he was 26. Khyentse Chökyi Lodro invited Kongtrül Lodro Thaye[678] (1813-1899) from Palpung Monastery[679] to determine the perfect site for the shedra. Construction began as soon as Kongtrül Rinpoche had identified the location. As Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo had instructed, the shedra was named 'Khamche Shedrup Dargye Ling'. Even before the building was completed, Khyentse Chökyi Lodro invited Khenpo Zhenga[680] from Śrī Siṃha Shedra of Dzogchen Monastery to become the first khenpo in charge of studies. Therefore, in the early years, teaching took place at Dzongsar Monastery, in Chökyi Lodro's private residence, on the very top of Tse Lhakhang.[681]

The bases for all studies at the Dzongsar Shedra are 'the textbooks of Indian origin',[682] which are organized into four groups of textbooks:[683] 1) Madhyamaka, 2) Prajñāpāramitā, 3) Vinaya and 4) Abhidharma. These four groups cover all 'thirteen great textbooks of Indian origin'.[684] Tibetan texts[685] were used as commentarial

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676 Dzongsar Shedra 'Khamche Shedrup Dargye Ling' [rdzongs sar khams bye bshad grva bshad sgrub dar rgyal gling] was built in the valley below the Dzongsar Monastery, which is situated on the top of a hill.

677 rang byung bco lnga pa'i sa rta lo.

678 kong sprul blo gros mtha' yas

679 dpal spungs

680 According to a dream perception of Dzongsar Chökyi Lodro, Khenpo Zhenga was a tulku of Sakya Paṇḍita. Khenpo Zhenga was also considered to be an incarnation of the Ngor Thartse Khenchen Kunga Tenpe Gyaltsen [ngor thar rtse mkhan chen byams pa kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan]. Ga Ngakwang Legpa [sga ngag dbang legs pa] also identified Khenpo Zhenga as an incarnation of Sakya Paṇḍita.

681 rtse lha khang gi yang thog

682 rgya bzhung

683 rtsa pod bzhi

684 The 'thirteen great textbooks of Indian origin' [gzhung chen bcu gsum] are grouped as follows: The texts on vinaya ['dul ba] are: 1) Prātimokṣa-sūtra [so sor thar pa'i mdo] and 2) Vinaya-sūtra ['dul ba mdo rtsa ba]; the texts on Madhyamaka [dbu ma] are: 3) Prajñā-madhyamaka-mūla [dbu ma rtsa ba shes rab], 4) Madhyamakāvatāra [dbu ma la 'jug pa], 5) Catuḥśataka-śāstra [bstan bcos bzhi brgya pa / dbu ma bzhi brgya pa] and 6) Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra [spyod 'jug] (The Nyingma tradition considers the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra as a Madhyamaka text due to the importance of the wisdom chapter, while the Sakya tradition considers it to be mainly a Prajñāpāramitā text); the texts on Prajñāpāramitā [phar phyin] are: 7) Sūtrālaṃkāra [mdo sde rgyan], 8) Abhisamayālaṃkāra [mngon rtogs rgyan], 9) Madhyānta-vibhaṅga [dbus mtha' rnam 'byed], 10) Dharma-dharmatā-vibhaṅga [chos dang chos nyid rnam 'byed] and 11) Uttara-tantra [rgyud bla ma]; the texts on Abhidharma [mngon pa] are: 12) Abhidharma-koṣa [chos mngon pa'i mdzod] and 13) Abhidharma-samuccaya [chos mngon pa kun las btus pa].

685 bod gzhung

literature. What follows is a list of the lineage of khenpos who have taught at Dzongsar Shedra since its inception.

1) In 1918 Khenpo Zhenga Rinpoche himself conducted the opening ceremony of the Dzongsar Shedra,[686] where he taught for two years as the first khenpo.[687] At that time only fifty students were attending. Khenpo Zhenga was a direct student of Urgyen Tendzin Norbu.[688]

Among Khenpo Zhenga's many students[689] of the Sakya school were four who gained great fame: 1) Gapa Khenpo Jamgyal, also known as Khenpo Jamyang Gyaltshen;[690] 2) Öntö Khyenrab Chökyi Özer;[691] 3) Dezhung Tulku Ajam Rinpoche,[692] also known as Dezhung Tulku Jamyang Kunga Tenpe Gyaltshen[693] (1885-1952) and 4) Ngor Khangsar Khenchen Ngawang Lodro Zhenphen Nyingpo.[694]

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686 rdzong gsar bshad grva

687 mkhan rabs dang po

688 Ön Urgyen Tendzin Norbu [dbon u rgyan bstan 'dzin nor bu], also known as Urgyen Tenga [u rgyan bstan dga'], was a cousin [tsha bo] of Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye. He received extensive teachings on the 'thirteen philosophical textbooks of Indian origin' [gzhung chen bcu gsum] from Paltrül Rinpoche and also from Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye. Ön Urgyen Tendzin Norbu taught 'the thirteen philosophical textbooks of Indian origin' to his main lineage-holder Khenpo Zhenga. After Urgyen Tendzin Norbu passed away, Khenpo Zhenga became his successor at the Gemang hermitage [dge mang ri khrod] in Dzachukha [rdza chu kha] and taught for years at his teacher's residence. Later, Khenpo Zhenga became the main khenpo [las thog mkhan po] at the Śrī Siṃha Shedra of Dzogchen Monastery. Khenpo Zhenga taught the entire 'thirteen philosophical textbooks of Indian origin' to Situ Pema Wangchuk Gyalpo [situ padma dbang phyug rgyal po] from Palpung [dpal spungs]. At that time, Khenpo Zhenga founded a shedra at Palpung Monastery. It was Situ Pema Wangchuk Gyalpo who requested Khenpo Zhenga to write the famous annotation commentaries to all thirteen great textbooks. The annotation commentary to the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra was written by Khenpo Zhenga at Palpung monastery. Khenpo Zhenga also founded a shedra at the Sakya monastery called Kyegön Döndrub Ling [skyed dgon don 'grub gling]. Furthermore, Khenpo Zhenga also received many teachings on both sūtra and tantra from Loter Wangpo at a remote retreat center called Lasi Gang [la si sgang], Derge Lhündrub Teng [sde dge lhun grub steng]. At the same time, while receiving teachings from Loter Wangpo, he taught many students at Lasi Gang.

689 Further students of Khenpo Zhenga were Dzogchen Khenpo Apal Rinpoche [rdzogs chen a dpal rin po che], Lama Gendün Rinpoche [bla ma dge 'dun rin po che], Dragyab Thubten Rinpoche [brag g.yab thub bstan rin po che], Dezhung Jamyang Namgyal [sde gzhung 'jam dbyangs rnam rgyal], Nalenḍa Thegchok Tendzin [na len ḍa theg mchog bstan 'dzin], Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodro [rdzong gsar mkhyen brtse chos kyi blo gros], Khenchen Samten Lodro [mkhan chen bsam gtan blo gros], Ga Nagwang Lekpa [sga ngag dbang legs pa] and many others.

690 ga pa mkhan po 'jam rgyal / mkhan po 'jam dbyangs rgyal mtshan.

691 dbon stod mkhyen rab chos kyi 'od zer.

692 sde gzhung sprul sku a 'jam rin po che.

693 sde bzhung sprul sku 'jam dbyangs kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan.

694 ngor khang sar mkhan chen ngag dbang blo gros gzhan phan snying po.

2) The second khenpo at Dzongsar Shedra was Öntö Khyenrab Chökyi Özer,[695] who taught for ten years. Among his famous students were Dragyab Lodro,[696] Khang Mar Rinchen,[697] Khenchen Dosib Thubten Gyaltsen,[698] Dezhung Tulku Ajam Rinpoche,[699] Dzinpa Getsül,[700] Dezhung Chöphel,[701] Gonjo Tsewang Lhadar,[702] Kyegu Trinle Chöphel,[703] Lama Ngaga,[704] Trindu Khenpo,[705] Pangshar Khenpo,[706] Zhiu Do Khenpo Trashi Samdrub[707] and many others.

After ten years of teaching, Öntö Khyenrab Chökyi Özer was called by Situ Pema Wangchuk Gyalpo[708] (1886-1952) to become the main khenpo at Palpung Shedra,

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[695] Öntö Khyenrab Chökyi Özer [dbon stod mkhyen rab chos kyi 'od zer] was born at Önpo Tö [dbon po stod], a one-day journey to the north of Tangyal Trülpe Lhakhang [thang rgyal sprul pa'i lha khang]. At a young age he met Mipham Rinpoche (1846-1912), who asked his name. The boy replied, "My name is Khyenrab Özer from Öntö." Mipham placed the child's hand on top of his head and said, "As of now your name is Öntö Khyenrab Chökyi Özer." Under the guidance of Loter Wangpo [blo gter dbang po], Öntö Khyenrab Chökyi Özer studied 'the thirteen philosophical textbooks of Indian origin' [gzhung chen bcu gsum], 'the eighteen famous textbooks' [grags chen bco brgyad] and the writings of Gorampa. Loter Wangpo himself had received the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra and most of the 'the thirteen great textbooks of Indian origin' from Thubten Senge Rabgye [thub bstan seng ge rab rgyas], also known as Mipham Senge Rabgye [mi pham seng ge rab rgyas]. Thubten Senge Rabgye was a khenpo from Gorampa's monastery in Tsang [gtsang] called 'Thubten Namgyal Ling' [thub bstan rnam rgyal gling]. After Loter Wangpo passed away, Öntö Khyenrab Chökyi Özer began to study with Khenpo Zhenga. Öntö Khyenrab Chökyi Özer's other teachers were Mipham Rinpoche [mi pham rin po che], Ga Ngakwang Lekpa [sga ngag dbang legs pa], Jamyang Khyentse Chökyi Lodro ['jam dbyangs mkhyen brtse chos kyi blo gros] and Situ Pema Wangchuk Gyalpo [situ padma dbang phyug rgyal po]. Öntö Khyenrab Chökyi Özer was considered to be the most excellent of Khenpo Zhenga's Sakya students; he was said to be able to teach exactly like Khenpo Zhenga. Therefore, Khenpo Zhenga appointed him to be the second khenpo at Dzongsar Shedra. Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche [dil mgo mkhyen brtse rin po che] said that Öntö Khyenrab Chökyi Özer was an incarnation of Ngor Pönlob Ngakwang Legdrub [ngor dpon slob ngag dbang legs grub].

[696] brag g.yab blo gros

[697] khang dmar rin chen.

[698] mkhan chen mdo srib thub bstan rgyal mtshan.

[699] sde gzhung sprul sku a 'jam rin po che.

[700] 'dzin pa dge tshul.

[701] sde gzhung chos 'phel.

[702] go 'jo tshe dbang lha dar

[703] skye dgu phrin las chos 'phel

.[704] bla ma nag dga'

[705] khri 'du mkhan po

[706] spang shar mkhan po

[707] gzhi'u mdo mkhan po bkra shis bsam 'grub.

[708] situ padma dbang phyug rgyal po

which had been recently founded by Khenpo Zhenga. He taught there for seven years before returning to his own monastery, Öntö Monastery,[709] which, after Derge Gönchen,[710] was considered to be the second most important Sakya monastery in the Derge district.

3) Dzongsar Shedra's third khenpo was Gapa Khenpo Jamgyal,[711] also known as Khenpo Jamyang Gyaltshen.[712] He was appointed by Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodro to teach for a period of two years. Gapa Khenpo Jamgyal had previously studied at Dzogchen Gemang hermitage,[713] first with Önpo Tenlu[714] and later for five years with Khenpo Zhenga. His important students were Yena Chöphel Rabgye,[715] Ser Jong Jamyang Gelek,[716] Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodro,[717] Dezhung Kunzang Nyima[718] and Khenchen Dosib Thubten Gyaltsen.[719]

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709 Also he started a shedra close to his own Öntö Monastery [dbon stod dgon pa], at a place called Lhünpo Tse [lhun po rtse], where he began to teach a group of fifty students from all different schools and monasteries of East Tibet. He taught at the shedra of Öntö Monastery for twenty years. In 1958, the Chinese occupation army arrived in East Tibet, threw Öntö Khyenrab Chökyi Özer and all monks into prison and destroyed the shedra. Khenchen Öntö Khyenrab Chökyi Özer died in prison.

710 Öntö Khyenrab Chökyi Özer had previously founded a shedra at Derge Gönchen Monastery [sde dge dgon chen].

711 Gapa Khenpo Jamgyal [ga pa mkhan po 'jam rgyal] or Khenpo Jamyang Gyaltshen [mkhan po 'jam dbyangs rgyal mtshan] came originally from Ga Tharlam Monastery [sga thar lam dgon]. At the age of seventeen he went Ngor Evam Chöden Monastery [ngor e vaṃ chos ldan dgon pa], in Central Tibet where he received the precepts of full monk ordination [dge slong sdom pa] and many teachings on sūtra and tantra from Ngor Khangsar Khenpo Ngawang Lodro Nyingpo [ngor khang sar mkhan po ngag dbang blo gros snying po].

712 His teachers were Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo ['jam dbyangs mkhyen brtse dbang po], Ön Urgyen Tendzin Norbu [dbon urgyan bstan 'dzin nor bu], Loter Wangpo [blo gter dbang po], Drakra Jamyang Chökyi Nyima [brag ra 'jam dbyang chos kyi nyi ma], Lama Nyiga Rinpoche [blo ma nyi dga' rin po che] and Khenpo Zhenga [mkhan po gzhan dga']. Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodro [rdzong gsar mkhyen brtse chos kyi blo gros] had identified him as an incarnation of Gorampa [go ram pa]. Gapa Khenpo Jamgyal died at the Jangchub Hermitage [byang chub ri khrod], which belongs to Dzongsar Monastery. Gapa Khenpo Jamgyal had the woodblocks of the collected works of Gorampa carved.

713 rdzogs chen dge mang ri khrod

714 dbon po bstan lu

715 ye na chos 'phel rab rgyas.

716 gser ljong 'jam dbyangs dge legs.

717 rdzong gsar mkhyen brtse chos kyi blo gros.

718 sde gzhung kun bzang nyi ma.

719 mkhan chen mdo srib thub bstan rgyal mtshan.

4) The fourth khenpo, Dezhung Chöphel,[720] was also appointed by Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodro. He taught for five years at the shedra, and spent most of his life in retreat.

5) The fifth khenpo was Dragyab Lodro,[721] also appointed by Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodro. He was renowned for his great knowledge of the philosophies of all the Buddhist schools of Tibet. He taught at Dzongsar Shedra for three years. His famous students were Khenpo Ape[722] and Khenpo Triso Rinchen.[723]

6) Khang Mar Rinchen[724] was Dzongsar Shedra's sixth khenpo, also appointed by Khyentse Chökyi Lodro to serve for four years as the main khenpo.[725]

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720 Dezhung Chöphel [sde gzhung chos 'phel] came from Lethang Dezhung Monastery [le thang sde gzhung]. His teachers were Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodro [rdzong gsar mkhyen brtse chos kyi blo gros], Khenpo Zhenga [mkhan po gzhan dga'], Ga Ngakwang Lekpa [sga ngag dbang legs pa], Öntö Khyenrab Chökyi Özer [dbon stod mkhyen rab chos kyi 'od zer] and many others.

721 Dragyab Lodro [brag g.yab blo gros] came from Drabyab Sakya Monastery [brag g.yab sa skya dgon pa]. His teachers were Öntö Khyenrab Chökyi Özer [dbon stod mkhyen rab chos kyi 'od zer], Gapa Khenpo Jamgyal [sga pa mkhan po 'jam rgyal] and Ga Ngakwang Lekpa [sga ngag dbang legs pa] and Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodro [rdzong gsar mkhyen brtse chos kyi blo gros]. He was famous for being able to teach exactly like Öntö Khyenrab Chökyi Özer taught, who in turn was said to have taught exactly like Khenpo Zhenga [mkhan po gzhan dga']. The Chinese occupation army put Dragyab Lodro in prison, were he was tortured for many years. Whenever he had an opportunity, he taught his follow inmates. Drayab Lodro [brag skyabs blo gros] wrote a commentary on the wisdom chapter [shes rab le'u'i 'grel pa].

722 Khenpo Ape Yönten Zangpo [mkhan po a pad yon tan bzang po].

723 When Khenpo Triso Rinchen [mkhan po khri so rin chen] was a student at Dzongsar Shedra, he studied day and night. At night he would read books by the light of a butter lamp [mchod me] or with the dim light of an incense stick [spos]. At night when the moon was shining, he read by following the light of the moon, wandering up and down the hills of Dzongsar Monastery. Later, Khenpo Triso Rinchen became one of the greatest Sakya scholars in India and Nepal. Among his famous students in India today are Nyingma Khenpo Namdöl [rnying ma mkhan po rnam grol] and Sakya Khenpo Gyamtsho [sa skya mkhan po rgya mtsho].

724 Khang Mar Rinchen [khang dmar rin chen] came from Khang Mar Monastery [khang mar dgon], a Nyingma monastery, situated in the eastern part of Derge district, in Terlung [gter lung]. His teachers were Öntö Khyenrab Chökyi Özer [dbon stod mkhyen rab chos kyi 'od zer], Kathok Situ Rinpoche [kaḥ thog situ rin po che] and Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodro [rdzong gsar mkhyen brtse chos kyi blo gros]. For a large part of his life he stayed in retreat.

725 Later, ordered by Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodro, he started a shedra at the monastery of Neten Chokling Rinpoche [gnas brtan mchog gling rin po che], where he taught as the main khenpo for a few years.

7) The seventh khenpo was Khenchen Dosib Thubten Gyaltsen,[726] who was appointed by Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodro in 1943, at the age of 42. He taught for eight years. He was renowned for his ability to teach exactly like Öntö Khyenrab Chökyi Özer, who in turn was known to teach just like Khenpo Zhenga. His famous students were Khenpo Ape Yöntan Zangpo,[727] Khenpo Triso Rinchen,[728] Minyak Damchö,[729] Dragyab Chödar,[730] Dithok Thubten Nyentrak,[731] Dragyab Khyenrab Senge,[732] Dongthog Choktrül,[733] Dragyab Pedam,[734] Pewa Tulku,[735] Nyatrak Tulku,[736] Lama Döngyal from Po Monastery[737] and many others.

At the age of 50 Khenchen Dosib Thubten Gyaltsen returned to Dosib Monastery and stayed in retreat for four years. In 1957, he went on a pilgrimage to Central Tibet and India. In India he met Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodro and accompanied him on an extensive pilgrimage. In 1959 Khenchen Dosib Thubten Gyaltsen returned to Central Tibet, while Dzongsar Khyentse settled in Gangtok,[738] Sikkim. In 1966 the Chinese

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726 Khenchen Dosib Thubten Gyaltsen [mdo srib thub bstan rgyal mtshan] was born in 1902 [rab byung bco lnga chu stag], in the western part of Derge district, in Renda [re mda']. At the age of eleven, he became monk at Dosib Monastery [mdo srib dgon], a monastery following the Ngor lineage of the Sakya school. His teachers were Dzogchen Khenpo Apal [rdzogs chen mkhen po a dpal], Dosib Khenpo Ngakwang Damchö [mdo srib mkhan po ngag dbang dam chos], Öntö Khyenrab Chökyi Özer [dbon stod mkhyen rab chos kyi 'od zer], Gapa Khenpo Jamgyal [sga pa mkhan po 'jam rgyal], Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodro [rdzong gsar mkhyen brtse chos kyi blo gros] and Khardo Khenchen [mkhar mdo mkhan chen]. From Dzogchen Khenpo Apal he received teachings on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra [spyod 'jug], Prajñā-madhyamaka-mūla [dbu ma rtsa ba shes rab], Madhyamakāvatāra [dbu ma la 'jug pa] and many other texts. At Dzongsar Shedra he studied for eight years under Öntö Khyenrab Chökyi Özer and Gapa Khenpo Jamgyal. After these eight years of intensive study, he taught for three years at Dzongsar Shedra as an 'assistant teacher' [skyor dpon]. At the age of 28 he returned to Dosib Monastery, where he served as the main khenpo. Furthermore, he taught at Rabten Monastery [rab bstan dgon pa] and at Öntön Monastery [dbon stod dgon pa], where he assisted his teacher Öntö Khyenrab Chökyi Özer. Later, he taught at Ditok Monastery ['di thog dgon pa]. At the age of thirty-five, he returned to Dosib Monastery, where he taught the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra and other texts to twenty-four students.

727 mkhan po a pad yon tan bzang po

728 mkhan po khri so rin chen

729 nyi nyag dam chos

730 brag g.yab chos dar.

731 'di thog thub bstan snyan grags

732 brag g.yab mkhyen rab seng ge

733 gdong thog mchog sprul.

734 brag g.yab pad dam.

735 pad va sprul sku.

736 nya brag sprul sku

737 spo dgon bla ma don rgyal

738 sgang tog / sgang thog.

occupation army imprisoned him and he suffering extreme illness. Khenchen Dosib Thubten Gyaltsen passed away in 1971[739] at the age of 69.

8) The eighth khenpo at Dzongsar Shedra was Minyak Damchö,[740] who was appointed by Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodro in 1951. He taught at the shedra for five years, before being imprisoned by the Chinese occupation army when he returned to his native place. He later died in prison.

9) Dzongsar Shedra's ninth khenpo was Dragyab Khyenrab Senge.[741] Appointed in 1956 by Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodro, he taught for two years and returned to his native home. In 1958 the Chinese occupation army destroyed Dzongsar Shedra. Dragyab Khyenrab Senge passed away in 1981.

It is reported that between the time of Khenpo Zhenga and Dragyab Khyenrab Senge, over the period of nine khenpos, approximately eighty great khenpos emerged from Dzongsar Shedra. These masters went on to found twenty-five universities at different monasteries througout Tibet.

10) In 1986 the reconstruction of Dzongsar Shedra was begun with the help of the Panchen Lama. That same year, teachings were resumed at the Ngari Labrang of Dzongsar Monastery[742] by the shedra's tenth khenpo, Khenpo Pema Damchö,[743] who was appointed by Thubten Chökyi Gyamtso, the third Dzongsar Khyentse.[744] He

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739 He was considered to be the foremost student of Öntö Khyenrab Chökyi Özer and Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodro. He was Khenpo Kunga Wangchuk's uncle as well as his main sūtra teacher.

740 Minyak Damchö [mi nyag dam chos] came from Lhagang Monastery [lha sgang dgon pa], which had been erected by Chögyal Phakpa [chos rgyal 'phags pa]. For eight years he studied at Dzongsar Shedra, during which time he served as an 'assistant teacher' [skyor dpon] for four years. His teachers were Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodro [rdzong gsar mkhyen brtse chos kyi blo gros], Khenchen Dosib Thubten Gyaltsen [mdo srib thub bstan rgyal mtshan] and Khenpo Triso Rinchen [mkhan po khri so rin chen]. After he had completed his studies, he returned to his monastery. A few years later he was summoned by Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodro to teach at Dzongsar.

741 Dragyab Khyenrab Senge [brag g.yab mkhyen rab seng ge] came from Tsongsar Monastery in Dragyab [brag g.yab rtsong sar dgon]. His teachers were Khenchen Dosib Thubten Gyaltsen [mdo srib thub bstan rgyal mtshan], Dragyab Lodro [brag g.yab blo gros], Dezhung Chöphel [sde gzhung chos 'phel], Dezhung Tulku Ajam Rinpoche [sde gzhung sprul sku a 'jam rin po che] and Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodro [rdzong gsar mkhyen brtse chos kyi blo gros]. As Dragyab Lodro's servant, he received many teachings from him. He later went to Dzongsar Shedra and studied under Khenchen Dosib Thubten Gyaltsen for five years. During that time he served for a few years as an 'assistant teacher' [skyor dpon].

742 rdzong gsar mnga' ris bla brang.

743 Khenpo Pema Damchö's [mkhan po padma dam chos] teachers were: Dragyab Lodro [brag g.yab blo gros] and Khenpo Dragyab Khyenrab Senge [brag g.yab mkhyen rab seng ge].

744 rdzong gsar mkhyen brtse sku phreng gsum pa thub bstan chos kyi rgya mtsho.

taught for five years. In 1989 the shedra buildings were completed; currently teachings continue at the rebuilt shedra.

11) Thubten Rabsel, also know as Khenpo Phuntshok Namgyal,[745] served as Dzongsar Shedra's eleventh khenpo. He was appointed by his teacher Khenpo Pema Damchö and taught for six years.

12) The present, twelfth, khenpo at Dzongsar Shedra is Khenpo Dongtsong Tsheten.[746] Currently about two hundred and fifty students are studying at the shedra. Between 1986 and 2003 approximately twenty-five khenpos have graduated and are teaching in monasteries all over Tibet. Due to the activity of these khenpos, eighteen shedras have been rebuilt and teachings resumed.

The daily teaching schedule at Dzongsar Shedra in Tibet:

1) The monks are awakened by the sound of the 'small gong'[747] at around five in the morning. With the sound of the conch-shell[748] they are summoned to the temple hall, where they perform 'the three continuous practices'.[749]

2) Breakfast.[750]

3) The monks are summoned by the sound of the 'big gong'[751] to the temple hall for the 'first teaching session',[752] conducted by the main khenpo.

4) The monks are summoned by the sound of the 'small gong'[753] to do their first homework[754] in their quarters. Homework sessions are times when the monks are supposed to repeat the teachings out loud to themselves.

5) The chief cook summons the monks to lunch[755] by beating an iron triangle.

6) The monks are summoned by the sound of the 'small gong' for the 'revision teachings'.[756] In this session 'the assistant teacher'[757] repeats the teaching given by the

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745 thub bstan rab gsal / phun tshogs rnam rgyal.

746 gdong tshong tshe brtan.

747 thun rnga

748 dung

749 'The three continuous practices' [rgyun chags gsum pa] are 1) recitation of the Heart-sūtra [sher snying], 2) offering prostrations [phyag 'tshal ba] and 3) dedication [bsngo ba].

750 gsol ja

751 kha rnga

752 chos khrid dang po

753 thun rnga

754 rang sbyong dang po

755 gsol tshigs

756 skyor khrid

757 skyor dpon

main khenpo during the first teaching session. When he has completed his repetition, the students are free to ask questions.[758]

7) The monks are summoned by the sound of the 'small gong' for their second homework session.[759]

8) The monks are summoned to the main temple hall by the sound of the 'conch-shell'[760] to recite the protector liturgy,[761] in particular the twenty-one mantra recitation of 'the lion-headed ḍākinī.[762]

9) After the protector liturgy the monks must circumambulate the main temple hall three times.

10) Later, some monks 'practice debate'[763] while others 'discuss the teachings'.[764]

11) In the evening session[765] the monks are summomed by the sound of the 'small gong'[766] for their third homework.[767]

12) Finally, the sound of the 'small gong' indicates that the day's work is over. The diligent may continue their study and meditation until the early morning hours.

758 'dri ba dris lan

759 rang sbyong gnyis pa

760 dung

761 gsol kha

762 seng mdong ma'i bsnyen pa

763 rtags bsal gtong ba

764 bgro gleng byed pa

765 dgong thun

766 thun rnga

767 rang sbyong gsum pa

Life Story of Dzongsar Khenpo Kunga Wangchuk

The Life Story of Dzongsar Khenpo Kunga Wangchuk[768]

Khenpo Kunga Wangchuk[769] was born in 1921 in the state of Derge in East Tibet,[770] in the Jonda district,[771] in the village of Renda.[772] At the age of twelve his parents taught him to read and write. Until reaching eighteen, he worked on his parent's farm. In 1938 he took monk ordination at Dosib Monastery,[773] belonging to the Ngor lineage of the Sakya school. His uncle, Khenchen Dosib Thubten Gyaltsen,[774] was the head of Dosib Monastery. From Dosib Khenpo Dzepa Lekshe[775] he received the precepts of an ordained monk.[776] When Khenchen Dosib Thubten Gyaltsen founded a shedra at Dosib Monastery, Kunga Wangchuk was able to join the teachings. In the shedra the first teaching he received was an extensive explanation[777] on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, which was given by his uncle.

In 1939 Kunga Wangchuk went on a one-year pilgrimage to Lhasa and Central Tibet. At Ngor Monastery he received the precepts of full monk ordination[778] from Ngor Khenchen Jampa Namkha Kunzang Tenpe Gyaltsen,[779] from whom he received the ordination name Kunga Wangchuk. Returning first to Dosib Monastery, at the age of twenty-two, Kunga Wangchuk joined the shedra at Öntö Monastery[780] in order to study with Öntö Khyenrab Chökyi Özer.[781]

At 1943, Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodro requested Khenchen Dosib Thubten Gyaltsen to teach as the main khenpo[782] at Dzongsar Shedra. Kunga Wangchuk accompanied his uncle as a servant. This was the first time Kunga Wangchuk met

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768 Khenpo Kunga Wangchuk always refers to himself as Dosib Khenpo Kunga Wangchuk [mdo srib mkhan po kun dga' dbang phyug].

769 kun dga' dbang phyug

770 khams sde dge mnga' khul

771 'jo mda' rdzong

772 re mda'

773 mdo srib dgon

774 mdo srib thub bstan rgyal mtshan

775 mdo srib mkhan po mdzad pa legs bshad

776 dge tshul sdom pa

777 bshad khrid

778 dge slong sdom

779 ngor mkhan chen byams pa nam mkha' kun bzang bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan

780 dbon stod dgon pa'i bshad grva

781 dbon stod mkhyen rab chos kyi 'od zer

782 las thog mkhan po

Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodro.[783] From this great master he received many teachings, including a commentary on Śāntideva's Śikṣā-samuccaya.[784] Khenchen Dosib Thubten Gyaltsen taught for eight years at Dzongsar Shedra and Kunga Wangchuk was able to join the teachings for the entire period. He studied the 'six great collections',[785] the 'thirteen great textbooks of Indian origin',[786] 'the eighteen famous textbooks'.[787] During these eight years Kunga Wangchuk became Khenchen Dosib Thubten Gyaltsen's 'assistant teacher'.[788] He later said that the pressure to prepare for the teaching sessions as an assistant teacher was so great that he had to study for most of the night and hardly found time to sleep during these years.

Later, Kunga Wangchuk received many teachings on sūtra and tantra from Dezhung Tulku Ajam Rinpoche,[789] also known as Dezhung Tulku Jamyang Kunga Tenpe Gyaltshen[790] (1885-1952). In addition, Yena Chöphel Rabgye[791] gave him many teachings on sūtra and tantra. In total, Kunga Wangchuk studied for over ten years

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783 rdzong gsar mkhyen brtse chos kyi blo gros

784 bslab btus

785 According to the Sakya school, the 'six great collections' [pod chen drug] of texts are: 1) the texts on vinaya ['dul ba], 2) the texts on Abhidharma [mngon pa], 3) the texts of Madhyamaka [dbu ma], 4) the texts on Prajñāpāramitā [sher phyin], which here refers to the five teachings of Maitreya [byams chos sde lnga], 5) the texts on valid cognition [tshad ma; skr. pramāṇa] and 6) the texts on the three sets of precepts [sdom gsum].

786 The 'thirteen great textbooks of Indian origin' [gzhung chen bcu gsum] are: 1) Prātimokṣa-sūtra [so sor thar pa'i mdo], 2) Vinaya-sūtra ['dul ba mdo rtsa ba], 3) Prajñā-madhyamaka-mūla [dbu ma rtsa ba shes rab], 4) Madhyamakāvatāra [dbu ma la 'jug pa], 5) Catuḥśataka-śāstra [bstan bcos bzhi brgya pa / dbu ma bzhi brgya pa], 6) Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra [spyod 'jug], 7) Sūtrālaṃkāra [mdo sde rgyan], 8) Abhisamayālaṃkāra [mngon rtogs rgyan], 9) Madhyānta-vibhaṇga [dbus mtha' rnam 'byed], 10) Dharma-dharmatā-vibhaṇga [chos dang chos nyid rnam 'byed], 11) Uttara-tantra [rgyud bla ma], 12) Abhidharma-koṣa [chos mngon pa'i mdzod], and 13) Abhidharma-samuccaya [chos mngon pa kun las btus pa]. See *The Thirteen Great Treatises*.

787 The 'eighteen famous textbooks' [grags chen bco brgyad] of the Sakya tradition are: 1) Sūtrālaṃkāra [mdo sde rgyan], 2) Abhisamayālaṃkāra [mngon rtogs rgyan], 3) Madhyānta-vibhaṇga [dbus mtha' rnam 'byed], 4) Dharma-dharmatā-vibhaṇga [chos dang chos nyid rnam 'byed], 5) Uttara-tantra [rgyud bla ma], 6) Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra [spyod 'jug], 7) Pramāṇa-sammuccaya [tshad ma kun btus], 8) Pramāṇa-vārttika [tshad ma rnam 'grel], 9) Pramāṇa-vimiścaya [tshad ma rnam nges], 10) Prātimokṣa-sūtra [so sor thar pa'i mdo], 11) Vinaya-sūtra ['dul ba mdo rtsa ba], 12) Abhidharma-samuccaya [chos mngon pa kun las btus pa], 13) Abhidharma-koṣa [chos mngon pa'i mdzod], 14) Prajñā-madhyamaka-mūla [dbu ma rtsa ba shes rab], 15) Madhyamakāvatāra [dbu ma la 'jug pa], 16) Catuḥśataka-śāstra [bstan bcos bzhi brgya pa / dbu ma bzhi brgya pa], 17) 'The Treasury of Valid Cognition' [tshad ma rigs gter] and 18) 'The Classification of the Three Sets of Precepts' [sdom gsum rab dbye].

788 skyor dpon

789 sde gzhung sprul sku a 'jam rin po che.

790 sde bzhung sprul sku 'jam dbyangs kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan.

791 ye na chos 'phel rab rgyas

with Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodro and his uncle Khenchen Dosib Thubten Gyaltsen.

At the age of thirty-one, in 1951, Kunga Wangchuk returned to Dosib Monastery on his uncle's instructions and became the main khenpo there, teaching about twenty students. In 1956,[792] he started a shedra at Vara Monastery[793] in Derge with twenty students. He taught at Vara Monastery until 1959, when due to the Chinese invasion of Tibet it became impossible to teach the dharma any longer. Khenchen Kunga Wangchuk was imprisoned from 1962 until 1980. After being released, he stayed with relatives in Derge for one year.

During this time, Khenchen Kunga Wangchuk received three letters from the third Dzongsar Khyentse Thubten Chökyi Gyamtso inviting him to India. After a long seven-month journey Khenchen Kunga Wangchuk arrived in Sikkim at the age of 62. Following an extensive pilgrimage in Nepal and India, on the request of the third Dzongsar Khyentse, he started the Dzongsar Shedra in 1983 in West Sikkim, at the holy site of Dechen Ling.[794] At first, the shedra only had seven students, one of whom was the third Dzongsar Khyentse. The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra was the very first teaching given. The entire curriculum was modeled after the Dzongsar Shedra in East Tibet. In 1985 the Dzongsar Shedra moved from Sikkim to Bir, Kangra, Himachal Pradesh, North India. Over 70 monks joined the new shedra. By 2003 the number of students had grown to 450.

Khenchen Kunga Wangchuk himself taught until he reached the age of 73. He always taught 'thirteen great textbooks of Indian origin' based on Khenpo Zhenga's annotation commentaries. While teaching at Bir he wrote additional annotation commentaries to Khenpo Zhenga's annotation commentaries. In 1997, on a visit to Taiwan, Khenchen Kunga Wangchuk wrote a commentary on the ninth chapter of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra.

Throughout his lifetime Khenchen Kunga Wangchug taught the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra sixteen times. The explanation lineage that he received is as follows: At Dosib Monastery[795] as well as at the Dzongsar Shedra he received teachings on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra from his uncle, Khenchen Dosib Thubten Gyaltsen,[796] based on Khenpo Zhenga's annotation commentary. His uncle had received this teaching from Dzogchen Khenpo Apal[797] and from Khenpo Zhenga himself.[798]

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[792] me sprel lo

[793] va ra dgon pa

[794] bde chen gling

[795] mdo srib dgon pa

[796] mdo srib thub bstan rgyal mtshan

[797] Dzogchen Khenpo Apal [rdzogs chen mkhan po a dpal] was a direct student of Khenpo Zhenga.

In addition, Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodro, Khenchen Kunga Wangchuk received the reading transmission interspersed with a commentary[799] on Khenpo Kunpal's commentary to the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. Dzongsar Khyentse Chökyi Lodro had received the transmission of the text directly from Khenpo Kunpal.[800]

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798 Khenpo Zhenga [gzhan dga'] received the teachings on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra from Ön Urgyen Tendzin Norbu [dbon u rgyan bstan 'dzin nor bu], who was a cousin [tsha bo] of Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye. Ön Urgyen Tendzin Norbu had received extensive teachings on the 'thirteen great textbooks of Indian origin' [gzhung chen bcu gsum] both from Paltrül Rinpoche and from Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye. Ön Urgyen Tendzin Norbu taught all 'thirteen great textbooks of Indian origin' [gzhung chen bcu gsum] to his main lineage-holder, Khenpo Zhenga. Khenpo Zhenga is also reported to have received many teachings on textbooks, including the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, from Loter Wangpo [blo gter dbang po], who in turn had received his transmission from Tanak Khenpo Thubten Senge Rabgye [rta nag mkhan po thub bstan seng ge rab rgyas], a famous khenpo at Gorampa's monastery 'Thubten Namgyal Ling' [thub bstan rnam rgyal gling].

799 khrid lung

800 Dzongsar Khenpo Khyenrab Wangchuk [rdzong gsar mkhan po mkhyen rab dbang phyug] received the reading instruction interspersed with teachings [khrid lung] on Khenpo Kunpal's commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra from Khenchen Kunga Wangchuk. In addition, throughout his twelve years of study at Dzongsar Shedra in Bir, Khenpo Khyenrab Wangchuk on three occasions received extensive commentaries from Khenchen Kunga Wangchuk on Khenpo Zhenga's annotation commentary to the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra.

Interview with Khenpo Ape

Khenpo Ape Yönten Zangpo[801] is a leading scholar of the Sakya School. His primary places of study were the shedra at Serjong Monastery[802] and later the shedra at Dzongsar, both located in the Derge district of East Tibet.

At the age of nine Khenpo Ape become a monk at Serjong Monastery, where a year later he received his first teachings on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra from Gapa Khenpo Jamgyal,[803] also known as Khenpo Jamyang Gyaltshen.[804]

Khenpo Jamgyal, an eminent practitioner of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, was renowned as a great bodhisattva and was a famous upholder of the vinaya tradition.[805] He was a student of Loter Wangpo[806] as well as Khenpo Zhenga.[807] Khenpo Jamgyal knew the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra root text by heart and always taught from memory. He died when Khenpo Ape was fourteen or fifteen years old. Gapa Khenpo Jamgyal gained great renown when he served as the third main khenpo at Dzongsar Shedra.

For nine years, from the age of 14 to 23, at Serjong Shedra, Khenpo Ape studied 'the thirteen great textbooks of Indian origin'[808] based on Khenpo Zhenga's annotation commentaries, which he said are for the most part based on the Indian commentaries.[809] To teach and study all 'thirteen great textbooks', including the secondary textbooks and commentaries, required five years. When Khenpo Ape attended the Serjong Shedra, between thirty and forty monks were studying there. It was a custom at Serjom Shedra to begin this five-year course with a commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra.

Serjong Shedra was founded by Khenpo Ape's teacher, Gapa Khenpo Jamgyal Rinpoche. Khenpo Jamyang Drime[810] served as the shedra's first khenpo. Followed

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801 Serjong Khenpo Ape's [gser ljong mkhan po a pad] actual name is Khenpo Yöntan Zangpo [mkhan po yon tan bzang po].

802 gser ljongs dgon pa

803 ga pa mkhan po 'jam rgyal

804 mkhan po 'jam dbyangs rgyal mtshan

805 'dul ba 'dzin pa

806 blo gter dbang po

807 mkhan po gzhan dga'

808 gzhung chen bcu gsum

809 rgya 'grel

810 mkhan po 'jam dbyangs dri med

by Khenpo Kedrup Senge[811] and Khenpo Jamyang Gelek.[812] Khenpo Ape studied with these great masters for seven years. During his last two years at the shedra he studied with Dragyab Lodro Gyaltshen,[813] who later became the fifth khenpo at Dzongsar Shedra. After his nine years of intensive study at Serjong Shedra, Khenpo Ape went to the shedra at Dzongsar Monastery, where he was able to continue his studies under Khenpo Dragyab Lodro for another year. At that time, ninety to one hundred monks were studying at Dzongsar Shedra.

In addition, Khenpo Ape had the chance to study with Minyak Damchö[814] at Dzongsar, before Minyak Damchö was appointed as Dzongsar Shedra's eighth khenpo; with Khenchen Dosib Thubten Gyaltsen,[815] who served as the seventh khenpo; and with Dezhung Chöphel,[816] who served as Dzongsar Shedra's fourth khenpo. Thus, before leaving Tibet at the age of thirty-four, Khenpo Ape was able to study with five masters who served as the main khenpo at Dzongsar Shedra: Gapa Khenpo Jamgyal, Dragyab Lodro, Minyak Damchö, Khenchen Dosib Thubten Gyaltsen and Dezhung Chöphel.

Khenpo Ape received teachings on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra from many of the eminent khenpos mentioned above. Two of Khenpo Ape's teachers wrote commentaries on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra; Drayab Lodro wrote a commentary on the wisdom chapter,[817] and Dezhung Chöphel[818] wrote an annotation commentary[819] on the same chapter, which has unfortunately been lost.

Another major teacher of Khenpo Ape was Dezhung Tulku Ajam Rinpoche,[820] also known as Dezhung Tulku Jamyang Kunga Tenpe Gyaltshen[821] (1885-1952). At the age of 28, Ajam Rinpoche studied the thirteen great textbooks of Indian origin under Khenpo Zhenga at Śrī Siṃha Shedra for a period of six years. Ajam Rinpoche reports about Khenpo Zhenga's teaching style: "I first studied the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra during the spring. When we gathered for the teaching session in the morning, the snow had fallen about one cubit high during the night. When the session was over, the snow had melted. During that period Khenpo Zhenga taught in great detail two pages of his annotation commentary, giving an amazing discourse according to Paltrül

[811] mkhan po mkhas grub seng ge

[812] mkhan po 'jam dbyangs dge legs

[813] brag g.yab blo gros rgyal mtshan

[814] mi nyag dam chos

[815] mdo srib thub bstan rgyal mtshan

[816] sde gzhung chos 'phel

[817] shes rab le'u'i 'grel pa

[818] chos 'phel

[819] mchan 'grel

[820] sde gzhung sprul sku a 'jam rin po che

[821] sde bzhung sprul sku 'jam dbyangs kun dga' bstan pa'i rgyal mtshan

Rinpoche's oral explanation lineage, teaching every word of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra according to the relative bodhicitta, ultimate bodhicitta and their unity."[822] This narration indicates that Khenpo Zhenga probably taught the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra for five or six hours, from nine in the morning until two or three in the afternoon, based on his annotation commentary. Beside the fact that Khenpo Zhenga taught in a very elaborate way, we also learn that he explained every word according to the relative and ultimate bodhicitta as well as in regard to the unity of both. Khenpo Zhenga is also reported to have taught the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra from memory.

[822] See *'jam rgyal rnam thar*, pages 63-65.

Khenpo Ape's Advice on Studying the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra

The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is the most practice-oriented of all the Indian Buddhist treatises and texts.[823] It contains all the necessary key points a practitioner needs to know and is relatively easy to study and understand. The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is a text to be practiced and not simply studied. Genuine understanding comes about only through practicing the teachings. As Atiśa said, "Intense study brings only some understanding. Practice, however, brings great understanding."

The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra can be practiced according to the 'sequence of meditation'[824] as taught in the manuals written by Rongtönpa[825] and Paltrül Rinpoche. Following these manuals, the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is practiced in a particular order and is used as a text for 'mind-training'.[826]

From the viewpoint of a beginner the best way to access the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is as follows: Choose one stanza of the text and make the commitment to practice it. At first think about the meaning of this particular teaching and then try to apply it in your daily activities. At the very moment when afflictions such as ignorance, anger, desire, jealousy or miserliness arise, apply the stanza you are practicing to the situation. By gradually incorporating more stanzas into your daily practice, you will eventually know the entire text by heart and will be able to apply each respective stanza to the appropriate situation. That is the benefit that accrues from memorizing the text.

Merely recalling the appropriate stanza in situations when your mind is ablaze with afflictions will allow the power of the words of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra to pacify the situation. Understanding the text's meaning increases its capacity to tame afflictions. The full power of each stanza does not manifest through simply remembering it one time in a difficult situation. These teachings must be practiced again and again, and constantly applied to one's daily life. This approach to taming the mind is called 'mind-training'.[827]

The only way to truly overcome all afflictions is through practicing the view of emptiness. Practicing the skillful means of compassion, patience and so forth overcomes afflictions to some extent, but not completely. Practitioners should undertake mind-training embraced with the view of emptiness as taught in the traditions of Madyamaka, Mahāmudra or Mahāsandhi. Practice the view of emptiness

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823 bstan bcos dang gzhung

824 bsgom rim

825 rong stong pa

826 blo sbyong

827 blo sbyong

according to the oral instructions of your root guru and let your bodhicitta motivation and bodhisattva conduct be guided by the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. According to Mipham Rinpoche, the view of Prasaṅgika Madyamaka[828] as taught in the ninth chapter of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra and the view of the Great Perfection are identical. Another crucial text for any practitioner who wants to develop certainty in the view is Madhyamakāvatāra.[829] For the best results, practitioners should combine the study and practice of these texts with the direct instructions of their masters.[830]

A beginning student of Buddhism should first study the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra root text, receiving a direct commentary on it from a qualified scholar. A direct commentary on the root text brings out the power of the text itself more strongly than any written commentary can and gives the student a far easier entry into the spirit of the text. The wordiness of written commentaries often disempowers the root text, preventing its power from shining through. To teach a Tibetan commentary to a complete beginner might overwhelm the student with too many words and concepts.

Only a student who already has a sound understanding of the root text should study a Tibetan commentary with his teacher. The Sakya School favors the following four Tibetan commentaries: those written by Sönam Tsemo[831] (1142-1182), Lhopa Kunkhyen Rinchen Pal,[832] Lama Dampa Sönam Gyaltsen Pal Zangpo[833] (1312-1375) and Sazang Mati Penchen Jamyang Lodro[834] (1294-1376). These four commentaries are all based on Indian commentaries as well as on the explanations of each author's personal teacher.

Tibetan scholars prefer to begin by studying commentaries on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra that were written by Tibetans since they are easier to understand than translated Indian commentaries. All major commentaries written by Tibetan authors

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828 dbu ma thal gyur ba

829 dbu ma la 'jug pa

830 bla ma'i gdams ngag

831 Sönam Tsemo [bsod nams rtse mo] wrote a famous commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. See *bsod nams rtse mo 'grel pa*.

832 Lhopa Kunkhyen Rinchen Pal [lho pa kun mkhyen rin chen dpal] was a direct student of Sakya Paṇḍita Kunga Gyaltshen [sa skya paṇḍita kun dga' rgyal mtshan] (1182-1251), from whom he received detailed teachings on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. He wrote his commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra as a synopsis [zin bris] of the teachings he had received from Sakya Paṇḍita. See *zin bris 'jam dpal zhal lung*.

833 In 1338 Lama Dampa Sönam Gyaltsen Pal Zangpo [bla ma dam pa bsod nams rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po] wrote a famous commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. See *bsod nams rgyal mtshan 'grel pa*.

834 Sazang Mati Penchen Jamyang Lodro [sa bzang ma ti paṇ chen 'jam dbyangs blo gros], also known as Lodro Gyaltshen [blo gros rgyal mtshan], wrote a famous commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. See *sa bzang 'grel chen*. He was a direct student of Lama Dampa Sönam Gyaltsen Pal Zangpo [bla ma dam pa bsod nams rgyal mtshan dpal bzang po].

make frequent references to the Indian commentaries, which are considered to be the most authoritative source material.

Once you have gained a solid understanding of your own school's explanation tradition, you should also study the commentaries of other schools and definitely the Indian commentaries, of which Prajñākaramati's[835] (950-1030) is the most important.

When expounding the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra root text, the teacher should carefully prepare each teaching session he is going to give. He should reflect on each stanza he intends to teach. He should consult other commentaries to facilitate a broader perspective on the root text and should moreover, consider carefully how to present his explanation to the students. During the actual teaching session, however, he should be so well-prepared that he need not look at any commentary but can fluently explain the root text in a very clear and detailed manner. This is the classical teaching style of the scholars of old. Covering the same topic first in detail and then as a summary is extremely helpful for the students.

In general in Tibet, Buddhist treatises and texts were taught only to monks. This was because Buddhist knowledge was handed down exclusively in monastic communities. Texts like the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra were taught in a shedra, a place for the study of Buddhist philosophy. The main purpose of a shedra is to practice 'the wheel of reading, study and contemplation' from among the three wheels of conduct.[836] A shedra primarily focuses on the study of 'the inner science of Buddhist philosophy' from among the five major and minor sciences.[837] Some shedras only teach Buddhist philosophy, while others also include the major and minor sciences in their curriculum.

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835 shes rab 'byung gnas blo gros

836 As taught to the saṃgha by the Buddha, the three wheels of conduct ['khor lo rnam gsum] refer to the three types of activities performed by saṃgha members: 1) the wheel of reading, study and contemplation [klog pa thos bsam gyi 'khor lo]; 2) the wheel of meditation to overcome (afflictions) [spong ba bsam gtan gyi 'khor lo]; and 3) the wheel of work and activities [bya ba las kyi 'khor lo]. The wheel of reading, study and contemplation is practiced in the shedra. The wheel of meditation is practiced in retreat centers [sgrub grva], during the monks' summer retreat [g.yar gnas] or when conducting rituals in the monastery. The wheel of work and activities is practiced by lineage holders [chos bdag] and sponsors [sbyin bdag] who erect monasteries, shedras, retreat centers, stūpas and the like. It is perfectly acceptable and encouraged for Buddhist lay-practitioners to also practice all three wheels to the best of their ability.

837 The ten sciences [rig gnas bcu] are subdivided into the five greater and five lesser sciences. The five greater sciences [rig gnas che ba lnga] include the science of arts [bzo rig gnas], medical science [gso ba'i rig gnas], the science of linguistics [sgra'i rig gnas], the science of logic [gtan tshigs kyi rig gnas] and the inner science of Buddhist philosophy [nang don rig pa]. To be learned in the inner science means that one is learned in both sūtra and tantra. The first four of these sciences are also called the 'four common sciences' [thun mong gi rig gnas bzhi]. The five lesser sciences [rig gnas chung ba lnga] consist of poetics [snyan ngag], synonymics [mngon brjod], prosody [sdeb sbyor], drama [zlos gar] and astrology [skar rtsis].

Formerly, in East Tibet shedras did not exist as separate institutions within the main monasteries. Study was conducted at the monastery itself. Later on, monks began to have the chance to specialize either in Buddhist studies in the shedra, in meditation in the retreat center, or to simply focus on performing their various duties at the monastery.

A practitioner of Buddhism must by all means practice 'the wheel of reading, study and contemplation' and 'the wheel of meditation to overcome (afflictions)'. At the time of the Buddha, these two wheels were the main activity of practitioners. In those days it was the responsibilty of the sponsors to perform 'the wheel of work and activities', which meant building dwelling places and monasteries for the saṃgha. The monks practiced study, contemplation and meditation[838] in order to tame their minds. The Kadampas of old did not build monasteries or stūpas. They focused completely on study and meditation. In fact, they believed that building monasteries creates obstacles for the practice of dharma.

Paltrül Rinpoche broke with the tradition of teaching Buddhist treatises exclusively to monastic communities. He was the first Buddhist master in Tibet who began teaching the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra to huge crowds of lay people. While the audience may not have understood the subtle meaning of the entire text, Paltrül Rinpoche taught so as to make the major points easy to understand. When teaching a non-scholastic audience, one must condense the meaning and present it repeatedly in simple language, illustrating points through everyday examples and stories. In old Tibet many faithful and devoted lay people were kept from studying the genuine dharma since few teachers made the effort to explain the dharma in easy terms to non-scholars.

The practice of the dharma is based on discipline.[839] On this basis you engage in study, contemplation and meditation. Without study and contemplation you will not be able to meditate successfully. On the other hand, study without meditation will not lead to liberation. All three—study, contemplation and meditation—must be practiced as a unity.[840] Without maintaining discipline, your mind will be unable to develop the qualities arising from study, contemplation and meditation.

Study means receiving the teachings from a qualified teacher. Contemplation means thinking about the teachings, asking questions, dispelling all doubts and finally gaining certainty about the meaning of the teachings. Śamathā meditation[841] is taught in the eighth chapter of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra and vipaśyanā meditation[842] in the ninth chapter.

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[838] thos bsam sgom gsum

[839] tshul khrims

[840] thos bsam sgom gsum ya ma bral ba

[841] zhi gnas

[842] lhag mthong

For those who are not ordained monks, discipline requires maintaining the precepts of a Buddhist lay practitioner.[843] The bodhisattva vows[844] are indispensible for practicing the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. Every serious student of this text should receive the bodhisattva precepts from a qualified master.

Generally, for ordained monks there are four defeating offenses, four parājikas[845] that immediately destroy all precepts of a monk. These four defeating offenses cannot be amended and lead to expulsion from the saṃgha. The offender will not be able to reach the state of an arhat during this life.

If a bodhisattva commits either the one,[846] the four[847] or the eighteen root downfalls,[848] discussed by Khenpo Kunpal in great detail in chapter four, he or she can repair his breaches through confession and through supplication to the bodhisattva Ākāśagarbha.[849] Once a practitioner has received the bodhisattva precepts he should continue to take them daily through his personal liturgy practice. These precepts are the discipline that a bodhisattva must keep if he wishes to succeed in his practice of study, contemplation and meditation on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra.

I believe that the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is perfectly suited to teach a beginning practitioner how to tame his or her mind. One must read, comtemplate and meditate on the teachings of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra over and over again. Each time one can gain new insight. My teacher Dezhung Tulku Ajam Rinpoche[850] told me that only through practicing the text could one improve one's understanding of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. By practicing the teachings of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, wisdom-knowledge that arises from meditation[851] will increase and thus one's understanding of the text will become deeper and deeper. I believe that for any practitioner of Mahāyāna the study and practice of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is indispensible since this text encapsulates the Mahāyāna teachings.

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843 dge bsnyen gyi sdom pa

844 byang chub sems dpa'i sdom pa

845 The four parājikas [phas pham pa bzhi] are murdering a human being [mi gsod pa], telling lies about one's level of spiritual attainment [mi chos bla ma'i rdzun shod pa], unchaste conduct [mi tshangs spyod pa] and taking what was not given [ma byin par len pa].

846 For bodhisattvas of lowest capacity it is sufficient merely not to forsake the bodhicitta of aspiration and application, as the *Mahā-rahasyopāya-kauśalya-sūtra* explains.

847 Bodhisattvas of middling capacity must avoid the four root down-falls [rtsa ltung bzhi] such as not giving the dharma or riches due to stinginess and so forth, as explained in the *Gṛhapati-ugra-paripṛcchā-sūtra*.

848 Bodhisattvas of highest capacity must avoid the eighteen root downfalls [rtsa ltung bco brgyad], as explained in the *Ākāśa-garbha-sūtra*.

849 nam mkha'i snying po

850 sde gzhung sprul sku a 'jam rin po che.

851 sgom las byung ba'i shes rab

Interview with Kyabje Khenpo

Interview with Kyabje Khenpo Trashi Palden[852]

The shedra for Buddhist studies at my monastery, Kyabje Monastery[853] in the Derge district of East Tibet,[854] was built at the suggestion of Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo (1820-1892) and Chokgyur Lingpa (1829-1879). The shedra was named Trashi Yangzhag Kyilwa.[855]

Our shedra was founded and financed by Kyabje Tulku Sönam Chöphel Rinpoche,[856] the head of our monastery, who was a student of Dzongsar Chökyi Lodro,[857] Palpung Khenpo Trashi Özer[858] and Situ Pema Wangchuk Gyalpo[859] (1886-1952). It was Situ Pema Wangchuk Gyalpo who advised Kyabje Tulku Sönam Chöphel Rinpoche to start our shedra. Sönam Chöphel Rinpoche made it clear from the very beginning that in this shedra study, contemplation and meditation must be practiced as a unity. He said that since life is impermanent and the time of death completely uncertain, we cannot make any plans like, "I will study for a few years, learn the dharma well and then begin intensive meditation practice." Rinpoche told us that for this reason we must apply the dharma right now in our daily lives, particularly when studying in a shedra.

In general, the 'teaching tradition'[860] at our shedra followed the tradition of the Dzongsar Shedra,[861] which in turn was based on Khenpo Zhenga's[862] annotation commentaries[863] to all 'thirteen great textbooks of Indian origin'. These annotation commentaries, which for the most part are based on the Indian commentaries[864] to

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852 In January 2004, at the time of this interview, Kyabje Khenpo Trashi Palden, was 64 years old.

853 Kyabje Monastery Ngesang Zabmo Shedrub Tagten Dargye Ling [skyabs rje dgon pa nges gsang zab mo bshad sgrub rtag brtan dar rgyas gling].

854 The Kyabje Monastery [skyabs rje dgon] is situated in the East Tibetan state of Chamdo Ngakhül [chab mdo mnga' khul], in the Derge area [sde dge], Jonda district ['jo mda' rdzong].

855 skyabs rje dgon bshad grva bkra shis g.yang zhag 'khyil ba

856 skyabs rje sprul sku bsod nams chos 'phel

857 rdzongs sar mkhyen brtse chos kyi blo gros

858 dpal spungs mkhan po bkra shis 'od zer

859 si tu pad ma dbang phyug rgyal po

860 bshad rgyun

861 rdzong gsar bshad grva

862 gzhan dga'i bshad brgyud

863 mchan 'grel

864 rgya 'grel

these texts, provide the basis[865] for teaching on all the great textbooks of Indian origin. Tibetan scholars in general consider the 'Indian commentaries' more authoritative than the 'individual interpretations'[866] of Tibetan scholars. Tibetan commentaries follow the explanation lineage of their own school or reflect the author's personal understanding.

At our shedra, in addition to learning how to read and write, only the inner science of Buddhist philosophy could be studied. The entire range of all ten sciences[867] were not part of the curriculum, which was entirely practice-oriented.

The first khenpo at our shedra was Pawong Khenpo,[868] whose actual name was Garu Khenpo Jampal.[869] Twenty students joined the shedra when he began teaching. When he was serving as the main khenpo, Tsültrim Gyaltshen[870] was assistant teacher.[871] Later, Tsültrim Gyaltshen became the shedra's second khenpo. He was also the retreat master[872] at our monastery's retreat center. The third main teacher at the shedra was Khenpo Trinley Tharphyin.[873]

Dzogchen Khenpo Pema Losal,[874] who initiated the yearly three-month summer retreat[875] at our monastery, was the first summer retreat khenpo.[876] The monastery's

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865 gzhi bzhag

866 rang lugs

867 The ten sciences [rig gnas bcu] are subdivided into the five greater and five lesser sciences. The five greater sciences [rig gnas che ba lnga] include the science of arts [bzo rig gnas], medical science [gso ba'i rig gnas], the science of linguistics [sgra'i rig gnas], the science of logic [gtan tshigs kyi rig gnas] and the inner science of Buddhist philosophy [nang don rig pa]. To be learned in the inner science means that one is learned in both sūtra and tantra. The first four are also called the 'four common sciences' [thun mong gi rig gnas bzhi]. The five lesser sciences [rig gnas chung ba lnga] consist of poetics [snyan ngag], synonymics [mngon brjod], prosody [sdeb sbyor], drama [zlos gar] and astrology [skar rtsis].

868 Pawong Khenpo [pa baṃ mkhan po]. Pawong or Pawang [pa baṃ mkhan po] is the old name of Palpung Monastery [dpal spungs].

869 Garu Khenpo Jampal [rga ru mkhan po 'jam dpal]. Garu [rga ru] was Khenpo Jampal's family name. He was a direct student of Khenchen Öntö Khyenrab Chökyi Özer [mkhan chen dbon stod mkhyen rab chos kyi 'od zer], who was a true non-sectarian teacher [ris med bla ma] and one of Khenpo Zhenga's most famous students. Because he was not biased by any school, Khenchen Öntö Khyenrab Chökyi Özer had many students from all traditions of Tibetan Buddhism.

870 tshul khrims rgyal mtshan

871 tshul khrims rgyal mtshan

872 sgrub dpon

873 mkhan po phrin las mthar phyin

874 rdogs chen mkhan po padma blo gsal

prātimokṣa lineage[877] goes back to Kagyü lineage masters such as Palpung Khenpo Trashi Özer,[878] Khenpo Dawa Zangpo,[879] Situ Pema Wangchuk Gyalpo[880] and the sixteenth Karmapa Rigpe Dorje.[881]

I became a monk at the age of six and began my studies at Trashi Yangzhag Kyilwa Shedra when I was fourteen, three years after the shedra was founded. In total I studied at the shedra for nine years, with the first three khenpos, Garu Khenpo Jampal, Khenpo Tsültrim Gyaltsen and Khenpo Trinley Tharphyin. We were about twenty-five students during that time. The daily schedule at our shedra was as follows:

1) Monks rose at about 5:00. The disciplinarian[882] alerted the monks that it was time to wake up by beating the 'small gong',[883] so they could start the day with their first homework session[884] in their individual rooms. While studying alone, the monks would have their early morning tea.[885]

2) After a short break, the disciplinarian summoned the monks to the temple halls by beating the 'small gong'. At this time, the assistant teacher[886] reviewed the previous day's teachings. These teachings were held in the assistant teacher's teaching hall.[887]

3) Next, the disciplinarian would summon the monks to the temple hall by beating the gaṇḍī stick. This was the time for the monks to perform 'the three continuous practices'[888] and to recite the Zabtig Drölma liturgy.[889] Then the monks received a bowl of soup.

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875 The summer retreat [g.yar gnas] encompasses primarily 'the liturgy of the three bases of vinaya' ['dul ba gzhi gsum cho ga] which include: 1) the summer retreat itself, 2) repairing and purifying (of precepts) [gso sbyong; skr. poṣadha], and 3) lifting of the prohibitions [dgag dbye] at the end of the retreat.

876 g.yar gnas mkhan po dang po

877 so thar sdom rgyun

878 dpal spungs mkhan po bkra shis'od zer

879 mkhan po zla ba bzang po

880 si tu pad ma dbang phyug rgyal po

881 rig pa'i rdo rje

882 dge skos / chos khrims pa

883 thun rnga

884 rang sbyong dang po

885 gsol ja bzhes

886 skyor dpon

887 skyor dpon chos ra

888 'The three continuous practices' [rgyun chags gsum pa] are: 1) recitation of the Heart-sūtra [sher snying], 2) offering prostrations [phyag 'tshal ba] and 3) dedication [bsngo ba].

889 zab tig sgrol ma

4) The main teaching session would begin when the sun rose, about 7:00 in the summer and 9:00 in the winter. The monks were summoned with the 'big gong'[890] to the temple hall for the 'first teaching session'.[891] The session began with the monks reciting lineage prayers, Karma Chakme Rinpoche's[892] praise to Mañjuśrī, and making a short mandala offering to the main khenpo. The first teaching session lasted for three hours, during which time the khenpo began with a very 'extensive explanation'.[893] For example, he would identify where the respective stanza of the root text occurred within the all-over structure[894] of the entire Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. He would then explain the particualr stanza of the root text itself and teach the respective pages from Khenpo Kunpal's commentary. Toward the end of the first teaching session, the khenpo summarized the entire teaching for that day, presenting a 'condensed meaning explanation'.[895] Thus, during the first teaching session, the khenpo taught the text twice.

5) The disciplinarian would next alert the monks with the 'small gong', indicating they should return to their individual rooms for their second homework session,[896] trying to remember and commit to memory what the khenpo had taught. 'Homework' in the shedra means repeating the main khenpo's teachings out loud to oneself. The students read the text, trying to bring to mind exactly what and how the khenpo taught, and to repeat these teachings out loud. In this way, the students trained themselves exactly in what the khenpo taught. Through such training, the teachings are retained in the students' minds just as the master has taught them. The students gain confidence and understanding, and naturally acquire the skill to teach the dharma themselves, in the traditional way. The most successful students were those who learned to exactly emulate their masters' teaching style. Those of high intellect could remember and repeat to themselves most of what the khenpo said. Those of lesser intelligence simply read again and again the two or three pages of the text that the khenpo had covered.

6) After the second homework session the monks had lunch.[897]

7) The main assistant teacher[898] again summoned the monks with the 'big gong' to the main khenpo's private room.[899] This session was called 'the revision teaching,'[900]

[890] kha rnga

[891] chos khrid dang po

[892] karma chags med rin po che

[893] rgyas bshad

[894] sa bcad

[895] bsdus don / bsdus bshad

[896] rang sbyong gnyis pa

[897] gung thigs

[898] skyor dpon chen po

[899] mkhan po'i gzim khang

[900] skyar bshad / yang bshad

since the main khenpo would repeat what he himself had taught during the morning session. This was the third time the main khenpo taught the text.

8) After a short break, the main khenpo and the assistant teacher together taught the text once more. The assistant teacher would sit together with the main khenpo in front of the students and repeat in sections, verbatim,[901] what the khenpo was teaching. Thus, the main khenpo had taught the same section of the text four times. Through repeating the teachings of the khenpo in front of all students, the assistant teacher was providing another perfect example of how to teach the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra in the future, by emulating exactly the words and style of the main khenpo. This gave the assistant teachers, who were later to become khenpos, and the students great confidence,[902] both in the teachings and in their future ability to teach.[903]

9) After a short break, the disciplinarian called the monks to the temple hall with the 'small gong'. At this time the assistant teacher by himself would explain the teachings again. When the weather was good the assistant teacher would teach in the garden; otherwise the teachings were held in the assistant teacher's teaching hall.[904] A good assistant teacher could repeat the teachings of the main khenpo while a lesser assistant teacher could only give a brief summary.

At the beginning of this session the assistant teacher would appoint one student to repeat verbatim what he taught, section by section. Every day another student would be appointed by rotation. Thus, all students learned how to repeat the teachings publicly. Toward the end of this teaching session, the students were allowed to ask questions.

10) The disciplinarian would alert the monks with the 'small gong' to return to their rooms for their third homework session.[905]

11) The monks were summoned to the main temple hall to recite a short liturgy for the protectors.[906]

12) Dinner.

13) After dinner, at around 21:00, the monks gathered for a question and answer session with the main khenpo in his private room. If the topic of the day was very difficult, this session could last until late at night, even up to midnight. For old and experienced students this session was optional.

14) Finally, the disciplinarian would alert the monks with the 'small gong' to return to their individual rooms for their fourth homework session.[907] The diligent ones would

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901 de'i rjes mthun / rjes bzlos

902 nges shes skye ba / nges cha

903 kha sbyang ba / byang cha

904 skyor dpon chos ra

905 rang sbyong gsum pa

906 gsol kha nyung nyung

study until late at night by the light of a butter lamp and would practice. The lazy ones would go to sleep.

Following this daily schedule, over the course of five years 'the thirteen great textbooks of Indian origin' and additional secondary textbooks and commentaries were taught in great detail. Three years after joining the shedra, I became assistant teacher[908] and continued in this post for six years. From our original group of twenty-five, only three become assistant teachers during their first five years.

When I became an assistant teacher I was completely overwhelmed by the task. I felt I had no skill at all to teach the dharma in a genuine way. Suddenly my life became difficult and I began to realize that to gain true understanding of the dharma is not at all easy. Merely having textual knowlegde of the dharma does not automatically lead to true insight. To gain genuine knowledge, experience and realization of what the thirteen great textbooks are actually teaching requires considerable blessing[909] and merit.[910] In order to acquire blessing one must supplicate one's root guru with great devotion. In order to acquire merit and purify one's negative deeds, one must practice the seven sections[911] as taught in the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. Recognizing this, I began to put great effort into my study, contemplation and practice, and slowly some understanding arose in my mind.

In our shedra after five years of intensive studies, only a few students qualified as assistant teachers. The best of those advanced to become khenpos. Minor assistant teachers must have studied for at least three years; greater assistant teachers for at least five years. Our shedra had no fixed rule for the number of years required to become a khenpo. This depended utterly on the individual's knowledge. Khenpos at our shedra did not get written certificates[912] as is the custom nowadays. The main khenpo did not publicly acknowledge someone's promotion from 'assistant teacher' to 'khenpo' by an enthronement ceremony.[913]

In general, khenpos in East Tibet were not supposed to go around proselytizing the dharma to everybody they encountered. A khenpo in East Tibet would only teach the dharma when invited to teach, either at his own monastery or at another monastery. It was not customary, as it is nowadays in India and Nepal, for khenpos to search for sponsors and set themselves up as the head of their own monasteries. In the Kagyü school in particular, building monasteries is considered a task for lineage-holders[914]

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907 rang sbyong bzhi

908 skyor dpon

909 byin rbabs

910 bsod nams

911 yan lag bdun pa

912 lag khyer

913 khri 'don

914 bstan pa'i bdag po / bstan 'dzin skyes bu

like tulkus and rinpoches, and not for khenpos. Khenpos are supposed to serve under tulkus and rinpoches.[915]

The reason to study in a shedra is twofold, to tame one's own mind and to learn how to teach the genuine dharma to others. Only when a person has tamed his or her own mind will his dharma teaching truly benefit others. It was neither the aim nor was it within the capacity of every shedra student to become a khenpo. Many khenpos remained as ordinary monks at their monasteries or spent the rest of their lives in retreat. Study, contemplation and meditation should not finish simply because someone has spent a few years at a shedra. A good khenpo keeps studying and practicing throughout his entire life.

I studied the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra in the following way. From Garu Khenpo Jampal I received teachings on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra twice, once based on Khenpo Kunpal's commentary and once on Khenpo Zhenga's annotation commentary.[916]

In general, there are two styles of teaching the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra: 'the scholastic explanation style'[917] and 'the practice instruction style'.[918] Paltrül Rinpoche's teachings on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra as recorded by Thubten Chökyi Drakpa[919] follow 'the scholastic explanation style', while Khenpo Kunpal's commentary 'Drops

915 In the Sakya school on the other hand, some great khenpos such as Lunding Khen Rinpoche, are considered to be lineage-holders.

916 Khenpo Zhenga taught the entire 'thirteen great textbooks of Indian origin' to Situ Pema Wangchuk Gyalpo [situ padma dbang phyug rgyal po] from Palpung [dpal spungs]. Situ Pema Wangchuk Gyalpo was told by his teacher, Khenpo Trashi Özer [mkhan po bkra shis 'od zer], to become a vinaya lineage-holder [so thar sdom rgyun 'dzin mkhan] for the Karma Kagyü school and to study the 'thirteen great textbooks of Indian origin' [gzhung chen bcu gsum] under Khenpo Zhenga. Based on this command, Situ Pema Wangchuk Gyalpo invited Khenpo Zhenga to found a shedra at Palpung Monastery. It was also Situ Pema Wangchuk Gyalpo who requested Khenpo Zhenga to write an annotation commentary to the entire 'thirteen great textbooks of Indian origin'.

917 'The scholastic explanation style' [bshad khrid / bshad pa'i lugs] of commenting on a treatise [bstan bcos] requires including different view points, interpretations and discussions on important passages of the text. The teacher or author must further back up whatever he explains or states with quotations from the scriptures.

918 'The practice instruction style' [gdams khrid / gdams khrid lugs / gdams ngag gi khrid lugs] of commenting on a treatise requires a straightforward explanation that inspires certainty about the practical application of the text and that dispels all doubts in the student's mind. For this purpose, scholastic elaborations and discussions are a distraction.

919 Thubten Chökyi Drakpa [thub bstan chos kyi grags pa], born in the 19th century, also known as Minyag Kunzang Sönam [mi nyag kun bzang bsod nams], was a direct student of Paltrül Rinpoche and wrote three commentaries on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. See *mi nyag kun bzang 'grel chen, mi nyag kun bzang sher 'grel 1* and *mi nyag kun bzang sher 'grel 2*. An English translation of *mi nyag kun bzang sher 'grel 1* was completed by the Padmakara Translation Group, see *Two Buddhist Commentaries*.

of Nectar' preserves Paltrül Rinpoche's teachings in 'the practice instruction style'. Khenpo Kunpal's commentary on the ninth chapter of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is based on Mipham Rinpoche's Norbu Keketa, which he wrote according to the teachings of Paltrül Rinpoche.[920] The study and practice of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra became so popular in all shedras of East Tibet due to Paltrül Rinpoche's influence. This text can truly transform the mind of a sincere practitioner.

In our shedra, students would study Khenpo Kunpal's commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra at the beginning of their first year. When there was not enough time to complete this commentary, the main khenpo would give beginning students teachings on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra root text. Khenpo Zhenga's annotation commentary would be studied later, according to the teaching sequence of 'the thirteen great textbooks of Indian origin'.

Teaching Khenpo Kunpal's commentary took between four to six months, with the khenpo covering five to six folios per day. To explain Khenpo Zhenga's annotation commentary to the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra took two to three months, depending on how much detail the main khenpo went into. In our shedra only these two commentaries on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra were taught, but the khenpo and the assistant teachers sometimes quoted from other commentaries during the teaching sessions. In our homework sessions, we students could compare different commentaries from other schools to gain a more profound understanding of the text.

When I studied Khenpo Kunpal's commentary, the main khenpo explained the text very carefully, covering four to five Tibetan folios a day. In general, all treatises and commentaries at our shedra were studied according to the same text-study-program.[921] Depending on the nature of the text, the khenpo would cover between two to five folios per day.

The study and practice of Buddhist treatises requires a strong commitment on the student's part. If you wish to be a successful scholar, you must stay at a Buddhist shedra for at least a few years, engaged only in study and practice. Such continuous effort is necessary for the dharma to transform your mind.

The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is a perfect teaching manual for beginners in Buddhist study and practice because it covers all the main key points of view,[922] meditation[923] and conduct.[924] The text explains the noble motivation of bodhicitta and its application in the six transcendental perfections.

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[920] Ju Mipham Jamyang Namgyal ['ju mi pham 'jam dbyangs rnam rgyal] (1846-1912) received teachings from Paltrül Rinpoche on the chapter concerning transcendental knowledge and shortly thereafter, in 1878, wrote a commentary to this chapter. See *nor bu ke ta ka*.

[921] dpe cha khrid stangs

[922] lta ba

[923] sgom pa

[924] spyod pa

My advice for beginning students is to first learn the root text by heart, while studying either Khenpo Kunpal's commentary or the root text itself with a qualified khenpo. Since words and meaning are inseparably interwoven, a thorough knowledge of the words greatly facilitates understanding the meaning of the text. Your teacher will point out the main key verses and you must, at a minimum, learn these by heart and keep them in your mind.

Interview with Khenpo Pema Sherab

Interview with Khenpo Pema Sherab

I was born in 1936 into a poor family in East Tibet, in the Jonda district of Derge.[925] I received my first education at the age of eight from my uncle. Later, I went on pilgrimage and continued my studies in Lhasa. In 1955 I was able to receive the precepts of an ordained monk[926] from Zhechen Kongtrül Rinpoche. While still in Lhasa, I met Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, received many teachings from him and became his servant.

In 1959 I fled from Tibet to India and began my studies in Buddhist philosophy at Barza, at the Bhutanese-Indian border. My main teacher at that time was the Kagyü Khenpo Khedrup.[927] Sometime the famous Sakya Khenpo Triso Rinchen[928] came and taught for a few months. For one year Sakya Khenpo Sangye Tendzin[929] also taught. Later, I was able to study intensively with Khenpo Tsöndrü.[930]

The first teachings I received on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra were given by Khenpo Triso Rinchen and were based on Khenpo Zhenga's annotation commentary. From Khenpo Sangye Tendzin I received another commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, also based on Khenpo Zhenga's annotation commentary. From Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche,[931] in 1967, I received a reading transmission interspersed with commentary[932] on Khenpo Kunpal's commentary.

Khenpo Zhenga wrote an 'annotation commentary'[933] on each of the 'thirteen great textbooks'[934] of Indian origin, including the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. One reason that Khenpo Zhenga's annotation commentaries are so widely used is that his lineage of

[925] Sde dge 'jo mda' rdzong

[926] dge tshul sdom pa

[927] Kagyü Khenpo Rinchen [bka' brgyud mkhan po rin chen] should not be confused with Sakya Khenpo Triso Rinchen [mkhan po khri so rin chen].

[928] mkhan po khri so rin chen

[929] sa skya mkhan po sangs rgyas bstan 'dzin

[930] mkhan po brtson 'grus

[931] Khenpo Pema Sherab received many teachings on the tantras from Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche, Düjom Rinpoche, Penor Rinpoche and Taklung Tsetrül Rinpoche. In 1968, Penor Rinpoche invited Khenpo Pema Sherab to teach at Namdöl Ling Monastery in Mysore. The Ngagyur Nyingma Institute, the shedra of Namdöl Ling Monastary, was established in 1978. Khenpo Pema Sherab, after the death of Khenpo Tsöndrü, headed the institute for many years.

[932] khrid lung

[933] mchan 'grel

[934] gzhung chen bcu gsum

explanation goes back to Paltrül Rinpoche. Paltrül Rinpoche's lineage carries a lot of blessing[935] and powerful aspirations.[936]

Khenpo Zhenga himself was not biased by any sectarianism,[937] basing his annotation commentaries for the most part on 'Indian commentaries'.[938] The Indian texts are considered to be without error and are prior to any of the sectarianism of the Tibetan schools. This is another reason why the Nyingma, Sakya and Kagyü schools all accept Khenpo Zhenga's annotation commentaries.[939]

The great benefit and blessing of a text is based on the author's bodhicitta motivation, meditation practice and vast aspiration. Śāntideva practiced bodhicitta and the bodhisattva path throughout his entire lifetime. He wrote the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra primarily as his personal meditation manual. Only after he had practiced intensively and had achieved such a high degree of realization that he could show great signs of accomplishment did he teach it to fellow scholars at Nālandā university. The words of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra are beautiful and not difficult to understand. But to actually apply this text to oneself is not at all easy. The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is entirely a text to be practiced.

A beginner who has gained a certain degree of understanding of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra has truly experienced a taste of the authentic teachings of the Buddha. This text is a perfect preparation for further study and practice in Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna.

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935 byin rlabs

936 smon lam

937 ris med

938 rgya 'grel

939 Khenpo Zhenga's annotation commentary was studied at the shedra [bshad grva] of Palpung [dpal spungs], a monastery of the the Kagyü-school, as well as at the college of Dzongsar [rdzong gsar], a monastery of the Sakya-school.

Interview with Khenpo Namdröl

Interview with Khenpo Namdröl

My teacher Khenpo Tsöndrü[940] studied at Dzogchen Monastery in East Tibet when the fifth Dzogchen Rinpoche, Thubten Chökyi Dorje,[941] was still alive. At that time, Dzogchen Monastery was renowned for its exquisite teachers of Buddhist philosophy. Khenpo Tsöndrü planned to study Dzogchen practice with the fifth Dzogchen Rinpoche and to receive additional teachings from khenpos on the 'thirteen great textbooks of Indian origin'[942] at Śrī Siṃha Shedra of Dzogchen Monastery. But Thubten Chökyi Dorje passed away only one year after Khenpo Tsöndrü arrived. Thus, he had no opportunity to receive Dzogchen teachings from this great master.

Though there were many great teachers and tulkus at Dzogchen Monastery, he decided to request Dzogchen teachings from Zhechen Kontrül Rinpoche. From this master he received several Dzogchen initiations including the Nyingthig Yazhi,[943] the Longchen Nyingthig[944] and so forth, together with extensive teachings on instruction manuals of the Great Perfection[945] like The Instructions of the Wisdom Master[946] and others.

He pursued his philosophical studies at Śrī Siṃha Shedra. Khenpo Tsöndrü told me that when he was studying at the shedra all the great khenpos who were teaching, as well as those who had taught there, possessed higher perception.[947] They were both great scholars and yogins. Most of the khenpos at Śrī Siṃha Shedra taught for four or five years and then went into retreat in the surrounding mountains.

Khenpo Tsöndrü further said that among all the shedras in East Tibet in his time, he considered the Śrī Siṃha Shedra to be the best. Khenpo Tsöndrü reported that due to the abundance of many great yogin-scholars, students at Śrī Siṃha Shedra were not

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940 Khenpo Tsöndrü [mkhan po brtson 'grus] was born in Gokok [mgo log], in North East Tibet. His father had been a monk at Sera Monastery in Central Tibet and his family were followers of the Gelukpa school. Khenpo Tsöndrü began his education at the age of seven. Due to practicing Karma Chagme's Mañjuśrī sādhana ['jam dpal smra seng] he became an expert in spelling, grammar and poetry, without having studied extensively.

941 The fifth Dzogchen Rinpoche was famous for his supernatural knowledge [mngon shes]. He identified, among many other incarnations, the incarnation of the present Pema Norbu Rinpoche and the present Dodrup Chen Rinpoche.

942 gzhung chen bcu gsum

943 snying thig ya bzhi

944 klong chen snying thig

945 rdzogs chen khrid yid

946 khrid ye shes bla ma

947 mngon shes

overly impressed even with someone like Mipham Rinpoche, one of the greatest scholars and writers of the time.[948] Mipham was 'only' an 'ordained monk'[949] not a 'fully ordained monk'.[950] Therefore, he was not allowed to teach as the main khenpo[951] at Śrī Siṃha Shedra.

Khenpo Tsöndrü said that the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra was taught at Śrī Siṃha Shedra exclusively based on Khenpo Zhenga's annotation commentary, just as were all the other textbooks of Indian origin. Khenpo Kunpal's commentary was only taught outside the Śrī Siṃha teaching hall, when interested students requested it from their personal khenpo-teachers. Khenpo Tsöndrü had the chance to study with two direct students of Khenpo Zhenga: Khenpo Ngawang Norbu and Khenpo Pema Tsewang.[952] Khenpo Tsöndrü studied most of Khenpo Zhenga's annotation commentaries of the 'thirteen great textbooks of Indian origin'[953] at Śrī Siṃha Shedra under Khenpo Ngawang Norbu. From Khenpo Pema Tsewang he received teachings

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948 While Mipham Rinpoche was staying at Dzogchen Monastery, Paltrül Rinpoche's main Dzogchen lineage-holder, Khenpo Lungtog Tenpe Nyima [mkhan po lung rtogs bstan pa'i nyi ma] had sent his main student, Khenpo Ngachung [mkhan po ngag chung / mkhan po ngag dbang dpal bzang], to Dzogchen Monastery to study with Mipham Rinpoche. When Khenpo Ngakchung, also called Khenpo Ngaga [ngag dga], arrived at Dzogchen Monastery, Mipham Rinpoche had just finished composing his famous 'Gateway to Knowledge' [mkhas 'jug] and he blessed him with this text. Though Mipham Rinpoche did not give the entire reading transmission of the text to Khenpo Ngakchung, he authorized him to teach it in the future. Khenpo Ngakchung only stayed a few years at Dzogchen Monastery. Later, he went to Kathok Monastery [kaḥ thog dgon pa], where he served as a khenpo at the shedra. When Khenpo Tsöndrü arrived at Dzogchen Monastery, Khenpo Ngakchung had already left for Kathok Monastery. Khenpo Tsöndrü reported that at that time Khenpo Ngakchung was reputed to be an incarnation of the great Dzogchen master Longchen Rabjam [klong chen rab 'jams]. Since he wore a black lower robe [sham thabs], the monks gave him the nick-name 'Black Skirt' [sham nag ma]. The fifth Dzogchen Rinpoche, Thubten Chökyi Dorje, told Khenpo Ngakchung that he would give him the throne of the 'main teaching khenpo' [las thog mkhan po] at Śrī Siṃha Shedra if he remained at Dzogchen Monastery. Normally, this high position was never given to scholars who had received the main part of their education outside of the Śrī Siṃha Shedra. Although Khenpo Ngakchung wanted to stay at Śrī Siṃha, he received clear indications in this dreams and meditation experiences that he should go to Kathok. In addition, Kathok Situ Rinpoche sent many letters inviting Khenpo Ngakchung to teach at Kathok.

949 dge tshul

950 dge slong

951 las thog mkhen po

952 This Khenpo Pema Tsewang [mkhan po pad ma tshe dbang] or Khenpo Pentse [mkhan po pad tshe] is not the same as Khenpo Chöga's teacher, who came originally from Phugkhung Monastery 'Dechen Chökhor Lhünpo' [phug khungs bde chen chos 'khor lhun po], a sub-monastery [dgon lag] of Zhechen Monastery.

953 gzhung chen bcu gsum

on the annotation commentary to the Abhisamayālaṃkāra,[954] including Paltrül Rinpoche's commentary on the Abhisamayālaṃkāra.

From Dzogchen Khenpo Chime[955] he received teachings on Mipham Rinpoche's commentary on the ninth chapter of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, called Norbu Ketaka. This master also gave Khenpo Tsöndrü a commentary on Mipham Rinpoche's extensive explanation of the Seven Line Supplication.[956]

From Dzogchen Khenpo Abu Lhagong[957] he received many teachings on tantra, among these a commentary on Mipham Rinpoche's explanation of 'the eight great sādhana teachings' of the Nyingma school.[958] In total, Khenpo Tsöndrü studied for six years at Dzogchen Monastery, during which time he was able to receive teachings on all the 'thirteen great textbooks of Indian origin'.

After his time at Dzogchen Monastery, Khenpo Tsöndrü went on pilgrimage to Central Tibet together with his mother. He joined Sera Monastery and studied there until Chinese oppression forced him to leave Tibet. While at Sera Monastery he met with his root guru Zhechen Kongtrül Rinpoche and also with Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche in Lhasa. Zhechen Kongtrül Rinpoche told Khenpo Khenpo Tsöndrü to rely on Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche in the future.

On arriving in India, Khenpo Tsöndrü first stayed at Barza, at the Bhutanese-Indian border. Invited by Dzongnang Rinpoche and Kuchen Rinpoche, he taught for six years at Mindröl Ling Monastery in Dehra Dun, India. Next he taught for two years at the Institute for Higher Tibetan Studies in Sarnath, Varanasi, India. Then he taught for five years at the Sikkimese government shedra in Dabrali, Sikkim. That is where I was able to study with this master.

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[954] mngon rtogs rgyan

[955] rdzogs chen mkhan po 'chi med

[956] tshig bdun gsol 'debs rnam bshad

[957] Dzogchen Khenpo Abu Lhagong [rdzogs chen mkhan po a bu lha sgang] was a contemporary of Khenpo Zhenga and a great scholar and realized yogin. During the latter part of his life, at the time Khenpo Tsöndrü met him, Abu Lhagong was staying in a cave in the hills above Dzogchen Monastery. Khenpo Tsöndrü reported that due to Abu Lhagong's accomplishment of the Tummo [gtum mo] practice, no snow ever settled on the ground around his retreat place [ri khrod]. Furthermore, Khenpo Tsöndrü told Khenpo Namdöl that Abu Lhagong's body never cast a shadow. Khenpo Tsöndrü observed that Abu Lhagong had about forty water offering bowls on the shrine in this retreat place. Every morning Abhu Lhagong himself would pour offering water into the bowls. Even during the intense winter cold of East Tibet, the water in these bowls never froze. Moreover, Khenpo Tsöndrü observed many miraculous signs during Abu Lhagong's cremation. He said that wherever the wind blew the smoke of the funeral pyre, relics would drizzle from the smoke.

[958] bka' brgyad rnam bshad

I myself was born in 1954[959] in Samar[960] in Derge, East Tibet. My family lineage is called Ngugu[961] and traces itself back to the family lineage of minister Gar,[962] one of King Songtsen Gampo's (618-641) ministers. In 1959 I fled Tibet together with Penor Rinpoche and arrived in Mysore, in South India in 1961. At the age of thirteen I become a monk in Penor Rinpoche's monastery, Namdröl Ling, in Mysore. Penor Rinpoche himself taught me reading and writing. When I was sixteen I was able to receive teachings from Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche[963] on the Viśeṣa-stava[964] and on 'The Practice of the Sons of the Victor'.[965] Around that time I received a commentary on the root text of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra from Sakya Khenpo Kedrup,[966] who stayed for three years in Namdröl Ling.

I had planned to study with Kunu Lama Tendzin Gyamtsho[967] who was about to teach the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra in Pokhara, Nepal. But when I arrived in Pokhara, the teachings were almost over and Kunu Lama told me that he would not be able to teach me in the future either. Six months later he passed away. I went to Darjeeling and received from Khenpo Palden Sherab[968] a commentary on Nāgārjuna's 'Six textbooks of Madhyamaka Reasoning'.[969]

Then, I went to Dabrali in Sikkim[970] and studied at the Sikkimese government shedra for four years with Khenpo Tsöndrü. The shedra had been started seven years earlier. Kagyü Khenpo Rinchen[971] had served for two years as the shedra's first khenpo. The

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959 rta lo

960 sa mar

961 rngu dgu

962 blon po gar gyi brgyud pa

963 smyo shul mkhan rin po che

964 khyad par du 'phags pa'i bstod pa

965 rgyal sras lag len

966 Sakya Khenpo Khedrup [sa skya mkhan po mkhas grub] was a direct student of Öntö Khyenrab Chökyi Özer [dbon stod mkhyen rab chos kyi 'od zer], who in turn was a direct student of Khenpo Zhenga. I also received from Khenpo Khedrup teachings on the Abhidharma-koṣa [mngon pa mdzod], the Madhyamakālaṃkāra [dbu ma rgyan] and the Madhyamakāvatāra [dbu ma 'jug pa].

967 ku nu bla ma bstan 'dzin rgya mtsho

968 mkhan po dpal ldan shes rab

969 The 'Six textbooks of Madhyamaka Reasoning' [dbu ma rigs tshogs drug] are: 1) Prajñā-nāma-mūla-madhyamaka-kārikā [dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab], 2) Vigraha-vyāvartanī-kārikā-nāma [rtsod pa bzlog pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa], 3) Śūnyatāsaptati-kārikā-nāma [stong pa nyid bdun cu pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa], 4) Yuktiṣaṣṭikā-kārikā-nāma [rigs pa drug cu pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa], 5) Vaidalya-sūtra-nāma [zhib mo rnam par 'thag pa zhes bya ba'i mdo], and 6) Rāja-parikathā-ratnāvali [rgyal po la gtam bya ba rin po che'i phreng ba].

970 'bras ljong

971 Kagyü Khenpo Rinchen [bka' brgyud mkhan po rin chen] should not be confused with Sakya Khenpo Triso Rinchen [mkhan po khri so rin chen].

second khenpo was Khenpo Dazer[972] who served for four years. Khenpo Tsöndrü was the third khenpo and served for five years. During his second year of teaching I arrived at the shedra.

The first teaching I received from Khenpo Tsöndrü was on Prajñāpāramitā.[973] He taught on Asaṅga's Abhisamayālaṃkāra[974] for more than one year and then continued with teachings on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra for almost another year. He began by teaching very extensively on Khenpo Zhenga's annotation commentary to the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. Then he gave a reading transmission interspersed with commentary[975] on Khenpo Kunpal's commentary to the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. Next, he taught on Paltrül Rinpoche's Sequence of Meditation on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra.[976] Finally, he taught Mipham Rinpoche's commentary on the ninth chapter of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, the Norbu Ketaka.[977] When I studied with Khenpo Tsöndrü in Sikkim we were about fifty students at the shedra.

In 1978 Penor Rinpoche built a shedra at Namdröl Ling Monastery and he invited Khenpo Tsöndrü to serve as the first khenpo. In one year Khenpo Tsöndrü taught the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra based on Khenpo Zhenga's annotation commentary, 'Khenpo Yönga's commentary on the three sets of vows'[978] and other texts. At that time we were only thirteen students at the shedra. I was appointed to serve as assistant teacher.[979] After Khenpo Tsöndrü had taught for one year at the new shedra, he passed away.

During the shedra's second year Khenpo Pema Sherab and I taught the students. In the third year, Sakya Khenpo Triso Rinchen taught for six months. He taught Abhidharma-koṣa[980] twice, based on Khenpo Zhenga's annotation commentary, to about forty students. In the fourth year Khenpo Rinchen taught for three months on Asaṅga's Abhisamayālaṃkāra[981] based on Khenpo Zhenga's annotation commentary. In the fifth year Khenpo Rinchen taught Candrakīrti's[982] own

972 mkhan po zla zer

973 sher phyin

974 mngon rtogs rgyan

975 khrid lung

976 spyod 'jug sgom rim

977 Ju Mipham Jamyang Namgyal ['ju mi pham 'jam dbyangs rnam rgyal] received teachings from Paltrül Rinpoche on the chapter concerning transcendental knowledge and shortly thereafter, in 1878, wrote his famous commentary to this chapter.

978 sdom gsum rig pa 'dzin pa'i 'jug ngo

979 skyor dpon

980 Khenpo Rinchen studied with Drayab Lodro [brag g.yab blo gros] at the shedra at Dzongsar Monastery in East Tibet, which follows Khenpo Zhenga's tradition. In total, I received teachings on the *Abhidharma-koṣa* [chos mngon pa mdzod] from Khenpo Rinchen three times.

981 mngon rtogs rgyan

982 zla ba grags pa

commentary on the Madhyamakāvatāra.[983] I was not able to receive this teaching from Khenpo Rinchen as I was accompanying Penor Rinpoche on his first return to Tibet.

Concerning the study of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra Khenpo Tsöndrü told me that though the meaning of the text is not difficult to understand, applying the teachings to one's mind is far more difficult. The purpose of the dharma is to transform the mind, to free us from our attachment to worldly concerns. Among all treatises and texts, Śāntideva's Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra and Paltrül Rinpoche's Words of my Perfect Teacher[984] are the most powerful texts that serve this purpose. If a qualified teacher carefully explains these two texts, a diligent student can definitely transform his or her mind and become free from worldly concerns. If even these two texts cause no transformation in a person's mind, that person definitely lacks the potential to become a genuine practitioner. Someone who cannot be benefited by the dharma is called 'a jaded or callous practitioner'.[985] Despite receiving the genuine dharma, he remains untouched by it, as a stone in water only gets wet on the outside but stays dry within.

While the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is designed to transform a practitioner's mind from the very outset, the other major Indian texts do not have this immediate practical applicability. The Abhisamayālaṃkāra[986] for instance teaches extensively on the ten bodhisattva levels and five paths. How can people who have not even reached the first bodhisattva level apply these teachings to their minds? Even a complete beginner, on the other hand, can immediately make use of the teachings of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra shows the methods, contemplations and meditations for transforming our minds, tells us how to free ourselves from worldly concerns, and thus how to become genuine practitioners. Khenpo Tsöndrü said that for these reasons the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra must be taught and studied extensively.

I myself can only agree with my teacher Khenpo Tsöndrü. I truly believe that among all the Indian treatises the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is the most beneficial to any sincere practitioner. The Buddhist teachings are vast and profound. There are countless sūtras, treatises, tantras and instruction manuals. For a beginner, who really aspires to become a genuine dharma practitioner, in my opinion no book is more suitable than the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. This text is a perfect gateway to the dharma. This text is a perfect guide and companion thoughout a practitioner's entire life. The way Śāntideva presents the dharma directly strikes one's heart. This is his special feature. He talks straight to your heart. The teachings of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra are common sense. Whoever receives or reads these teachings will agree and will think, "This is really true." Since this manner of presenting the dharma is so clear and easy to understand, it transforms one's mind if applied in daily life.

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983 dbu ma 'jug pa rang 'grel

984 kun bzang bla ma'i zhal lung

985 chos dred

986 mngon rtogs rgyan

Remarks About the Transliteration

Remarks About the Transliteration of the Tibetan Text

The Tibetan root text of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, *spyod 'jug rtsa ba*, was established with the help of the Peking Tangyur edition (P), the Derge Tangyur edition (D), and two modern computer generated editions, one printed by Sichuan People's Publishing House (S) and one printed by Dharma Publishing (Y).[987]

> *spyod 'jug rtsa ba (Peking edition)*: byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa, written by Śāntideva, Peking Tangyur No. 5272, Vol. 99, pages 243.1.1-262.2.7, folio 1-45a7, mDo 'grel (dbu ma) XXVI, La. This Peking edition of the Kangyur and Tangyur was begun in 1737 under the Qianlong emperor, reprinted and catalogued between 1955 and 1961, and published as *The Tibetan Tripitaka*. In the footnotes to the transliteration of the Tibetan root text we refer to this edition as text 'P'.
>
> *spyod 'jug rtsa ba (Derge edition)*: byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa, written by Śāntideva, Derge Tangyur, mDo 'grel (dbu ma), La. The printing of the Derge Kangyur was begun under Situ Chökyi Jungne[988] and the King of Derge, Tenpa Tsering,[989] in 1733. The Derge Tangyur was printed between 1737-1744. In the footnotes to the transliteration of the Tibetan root text we refer to this edition as text 'D'.
>
> *spyod 'jug rtsa ba (si khron mi rigs edition)*: byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa, written by Śāntideva, computer generated print by si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, Sichuan People's Publishing House, Chengdu, P. R. of China, by Zenkar Rinpoche, 1982, pages 1-134. In the footnotes to the transliteration of the Tibetan root text we refer to this edition as text 'S'
>
> *spyod 'jug rtsa ba (ye shes sde edition)*: byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa, written by Śāntideva, computer generated print by Dharma Publishing, Yeshe De, 95 folios. In the footnotes to the transliteration of the Tibetan commentary we refer to this edition as text 'Y'.

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[987] The most recently published *bka' bstan dpe bsdur ma edition* has not yet been integrated into this edition of the Tibetan root text. See *spyod 'jug rtsa ba (bsdur ma edition)* (PD), krung go'i bod kyi shes rig zhib 'jug lte gnas kyi bka' bstan dpe sdur khang gis dpe bsdur zhus, published by krung go'i bod kyi shes rig dpe skrun khang, bstan 'gyur Vol. 61, pages 951-1048, dBu ma, La. This edition contains different readings from four Tangyur editions, namely Derge (D) [sde dge], Peking (P) [pe cin], Narthang (N) [snar thang] and Cone (C) [co ne].

[988] si tu chos kyi 'byung gnas (1699-1774).

[989] sde dge'i chos rgyal bstan pa tshe ring

We were further able to get hold of four Tibetan editions of Khenpo Kunpal's texts. Among these four texts, the edition of the Zhechen Monastery, probably printed in the forties or early fifties of the 20th century in East Tibet, is the oldest:

> *kun dpal 'grel pa (zhe chen edition)*: byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i tshig 'grel 'jam dbyangs bla ma'i zhal lung bdud rtsi'i thig pa, written by Khenpo Kunpal, originally printed in Zhechen Monastery, East Tibet, off-set reprint of the Zhechen woodblock print [zhe chen spar ma], 371 folios, published by Lama Ngödrup for Kyabje Dilgo Khyentse Rinpoche. In the footnotes to the transliteration of the Tibetan commentary we refer to this edition as text 'A'.

We further used a modern reprint of the zhe chen edition, computer generated and published through Sichuan People's Publishing House, Chengdu, P. R. of China, by Zenkar Rinpoche:

> *kun dpal 'grel pa (si khron mi rigs edition)*: byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i tshig 'grel 'jam dbyangs bla ma'i zhal lung bdud rtsi'i thig pa, written by Khenpo Kunpal, computer generated print by si khron mi rigs dpe skrun khang, 1982, pages 137-817. In the footnotes to the transliteration of the Tibetan commentary we refer to this edition as text 'B'.

This edition must be treated with caution by any user. The editors have added titles in bold typeface to the sub-sections of the text. If one is not familiar with the original zhe chen edition, it is difficult to distinguish which titles were written by Khenpo Kunpal and which were added by the editors.

Tarthang Tulku published in the late nineties of the 20th century a computer generated reprint of the zhe chen edition:

> *kun dpal 'grel pa (ye shes sde edition)*: byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i tshig 'grel 'jam dbyangs bla ma'i zhal lung bdud rtsi'i thig pa, written by Khenpo Kunpal, computer generated print by Dharma Publishing, Yeshe De, 512 folios. In the footnotes to the transliteration of the Tibetan commentary we refer to this edition as text 'C'.

We based our transliteration of the Tibetan text mainly on the zhe chen edition of Khenpo Kunpal's commentary and have given variations in spelling and words in the footnotes, consulting the other two editions, following Wylie's transliteration system.

The fourth text, printed by Sangye Tendzin, 1963, in Nepal, proved not to be of any help for the transliteration of the zhe chen edition. This text seems to be a complete rephrasing of Khenpo Kunpal's text. A careful comparison has shown that almost every sentence has been rewritten. Sangye Tendzin himself studied in Zhechen Monastery as a young man. If he had gotten hold of an entirely different version of Khenpo Kunpal's commentary, we can presume that he would have stated so in his colophon. It is more likely that he himself rewrote the commentary, which accounts for

the fact that present day khenpos do not consider this edition as being reliable. Still, Sangye Tendzin's edition is helpful to translators since it often gives different readings and interpretations of the text:

> *kun dpal 'grel pa (sangs rgyas bstan 'dzin edition)*: byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa'i tshig 'grel 'jam dbyangs bla ma'i zhal lung bdud rtsi'i thig pa, written by Khenpo Kunpal, woodblock print by sangs rgyas bstan 'dzin, in 1963 (16^{th} rab byung chu mo yos kyi lo), Nepal, 345 folios. In the footnotes to the transliteration of the Tibetan commentary we refer to this edition as text 'T'.

Śāntideva's Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra

Śāntideva's Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra

Chapter One

Explaining the benefits of bodhicitta

Tibetan and English

[0] / rgya-gar-skad-du / bodhi-satva-tsarya-a-ba-ta-ra[990] /
bod-skad-du / byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-spyod-pa-la-'jug-pa /

sangs-rgyas dang byang-chub-sems-dpa' thams-cad la phyag-'tshal-lo //

[1] bde-gshegs chos-kyi-sku mnga' sras bcas dang //
phyag-'os kun la'ang gus-par[991] phyag-'tshal-te //
bde-gshegs-sras kyi sdom la 'jug-pa ni //
lung-bzhin mdor-bsdus-nas ni brjod-par-bya //

[2] sngon-chad ma-byung-ba yang 'dir brjod-med //
sdeb-sbyor mkhas-pa'ang bdag-la-yod-min-te //
de-phyir gzhan-don bsam-pa'ang bdag-la-med[992] //
rang-gi-yid la bsgom phyir ngas 'di brtsams //

[3] dge-ba bsgom phyir bdag-gi dad-pa'i shugs //
'di-dag-gis kyang re-zhig 'phel-'gyur la //
bdag dang skal-ba mnyam-pa gzhan-gyis kyang //
ci-ste 'di-dag mthong-na don-yod-'gyur //

[4] dal-'byor 'di-ni rnyed-par shin-du dka' //
skyes-bu'i don-sgrub thob-par-gyur-pa la //
gal-te 'di la phan-pa ma bsgrubs na //
phyis 'di yang-dag 'byor-par ga-la-'gyur //

[5] ji-ltar mtshan-mo mun-nag sprin-rum-na //
glog-'gyu skad-cig rab-snang[993] ston-pa ltar //
de-bzhin sangs-rgyas mthu-yis brgya-lam-na //
'jig-rten bsod-nams blo-gros thang-'ga' 'byung //

[6] de-ltas dge-ba nyam-chung nyid[994] la rtag[995] /
sdig-pa stobs-chen shin-tu mi-bzad-pa //
de-ni rdzogs-pa'i-byang-chub-sems min-pa //
dge gzhan gang-gis zil-gyis-gnon-par-'gyur //

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990 D, Y: tsarya a ba tā ra; P: tsaryā (tsargyā) ba tā ra
991 P: gus pas
992 D, P: bsam pa bdag la med
993 D: bar snang
994 Y: nyams chung nyid
995 P: brtag

[0] In the Indian language: *Bodhisatva-caryāvatāra*[996]
In the Tibetan language: byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-spyod-pa-la-'jug-pa (*Entering the Conduct of the Bodhisattvas*)

Homage to all buddhas and bodhisattvas!

[1] To the sugatas, who are endowed with the dharmakāya, together with their sons, and
To all who are worthy of veneration, I respectfully pay homage. That done,
In accordance with the scriptures, I will briefly explain
Entering into the precepts of the sons of the sugatas.

[2] I can say nothing here that has not already been said before,
And I possess no skill in prosody.
Hence, I would not even imagine that this might benefit others;
I wrote it only to cultivate (bodhicitta) within my own mind.

[3] Through these (compositions) may the power of my faith
Increase for awhile so that I may cultivate virtue.
Still, if by chance others equal in fortune to myself view these,
Some benefit might ensue.

[4] These freedoms and advantages are extremely difficult to obtain.
Since I have gained (the opportunity) to accomplish that which is meaningful for a person,
If I do not practice what is beneficial in this (lifetime),
How will a perfect opportunity like this come about later?

[5] Just as a flash of lightning amidst cloudbanks in the pitch black darkness of night
Reveals, for an instant, brightly illuminated (shapes),
In the same way, occasionally, through the might of the Buddha,
A meritorious thought arises briefly in (the minds of) worldly people.

[6] Hence, virtue is feeble while at all times
The great power of negativity is utterly unbearable.
Except for perfect bodhicitta
What other virtues could overcome (this negativity)?

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996 Note that Tibetans transliterate the Sanskrit 'bodhisattva' as 'bodhisatva'.

[7] bskal-pa du-mar rab-dgongs-mdzad-pa yi //
thub-dbang-rnams kyis 'di-nyid phan-par-gzigs //
'dis-ni[997] tshad-med skye-bo'i tshogs rnams kyis //
bde-mchog bde-blag-nyid-du thob-par-byed //

[8] srid-pa'i sdug-bsngal brgya-phrag gzhom 'dod-cing //
sems-can mi-bde bsal-bar 'dod-pa dang //
bde-mang brgya-phrag spyod-par 'dod-pas-kyang //
byang-chub sems-nyid rtag-tu btang-mi-bya[998] //

[9] byang-chub-sems skyes-gyur-na skad-cig-gis //
'khor-ba'i btson-rar bsdams-pa'i nyam-thag-rnams //
bde-gshegs-rnams-kyi sras zhes brjod-bya-zhing //
'jig-rten lha-mir bcas-pas[999] phyag-byar-'gyur //

[10] gser-'gyur-rtsi-yi-rnam-pa mchog lta-bur[1000] //
mi-gtsang lus-'di blangs-nas rgyal-ba'i-sku //
rin-chen rin-thang[1001]-med-par sgyur-bas-na[1002] //
byang-chub-sems zhes-bya-ba rab-brtan-zungs[1003] //

[11] 'gro-ba'i ded-dpon gcig-pu tshad-med blos //
legs-par yongs-su-brtags-na rin-che-bas //
'gro-ba'i gnas dang bral-bar 'dod-pa-rnams //
rin-chen byang-chub-sems legs brtan-par-bzung[1004] //

[12] dge-ba gzhan-kun chu-shing bzhin-du-ni //
'bras-bu bskyed-nas zad-par-'gyur-ba nyid //
byang-chub-sems kyi ljon-shing rtag-par yang //
'bras-bu 'byin-pas mi-zad 'phel-bar-'gyur //

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997 S: 'di ni
998 D, P; Y: gtang mi bya
999 S: bcas pa'i
1000 D, Y: lta bu
1001 D: ring thang
1002 D, P, Y: bsgyur bas na
1003 D , P: zung; S: gzung
1004 D, P: zung; S: gzung

[7] The mighty munis, who have contemplated for many aeons,
Have seen that this (bodhicitta) is beneficial
Because it causes unfathomable masses of beings
To attain supreme bliss easily.

[8] Those who wish to overcome the hundreds of sufferings of existence,
Those who wish to remove the unhappiness of beings,
And those who wish them to enjoy multitudinous (forms of) bliss
Should never forsake bodhicitta.

[9] Once this bodhicitta has taken birth, in that (very) instant,
(Even) those who were captured in the prison of saṃsāra
Will be called 'sons of the sugatas'
And will be revered by (all) the world, including gods and men.

[10] (Bodhicitta) is just like the supreme kind of alchemical elixir,
For it transforms this impure body we have taken
Into the priceless jewel of the Victor's body.
Therefore, very firmly seize (this elixir) called bodhicitta!

[11] Since the immeasurable mind of the Sole Guide of Beings
(Saw) its great value when he thoroughly examined it,
(All) those who wish to be free from the realms of beings
Should firmly take hold of this precious bodhicitta in an excellent manner.

[12] All other virtues are like plantain trees;
After coming to fruition they (simply) cease to be.
But the tree of bodhicitta constantly
Gives fruit and increases unceasingly.

[13] sdig-pa shin-tu mi-bzad-byas-na yang //
dpa'-la brten-nas 'jigs-pa chen-po ltar //
gang la brten-nas yud-kyis sgrol-'gyur-ba //
de la bag-can-rnams-kyis cis-mi-brten //

[14] des-ni[1005] dus-mtha'i-me bzhin sdig-chen-rnams //
skad-cig-gcig-gis nges-par sreg-par-byed[1006] //
de yi phan-yon dpag-tu-med-pa dag /
byams-mgon blo-dang-ldan-pas nor-bzang[1007] bshad //

[15] byang-chub-sems de mdor-bsdus-na[1008] //
rnam-pa gnyis su shes-bya-ste //
byang-chub-smon-pa'i-sems dang ni //
byang-chub-'jug-pa nyid yin-no //

[16] 'gro-bar 'dod dang 'gro-ba yi //
bye-brag ji-ltar shes-pa ltar //
de-bzhin mkhas-pas 'di gnyis kyi[1009] //
bye-brag rim-bzhin shes-par-bya //

[17] byang-chub-smon-pa'i-sems las ni //
'khor-tshe 'bras-bu che 'byung-yang //
ji-ltar 'jug-pa'i-sems bzhin-du //
bsod-nams rgyun-chags 'byung-ba min //

[18] gang-nas bzung-ste sems-can khams //
mtha'-yas rab-tu-sgrol-ba'i phyir[1010] //
mi-ldog-pa yi sems kyis su //
sems de yang-dag blangs-gyur-pa //

[1005] S: de ni
[1006] P: bsreg par byed
[1007] D: nor bzangs
[1008] P: mdor bsdu na
[1009] P: kyis
[1010] P: bsgral ba'i phyir; D, Y: dgrol ba'i phyir;

[13] Although I have committed the most unbearable negative deeds,
By entrusting myself to (bodhicitta), I shall be instantaneously liberated,
Just as (one will be liberated from) great fear by entrusting oneself to a hero.
Why do the ignorant not devote themselves to this?

[14] Just like the fire at the end of an aeon, this (bodhicitta)
Definitely consumes in one instant (even) great negative deeds.
The wise Maitreyanātha taught
Its unfathomable benefits to Sudhana.

[15] In brief, this bodhicitta
Should be understood to have two aspects:
The mind that aspires to enlightenment,
And (the mind) that enters into (the conduct of) enlightenment.

[16] Just as one understands the distinction between
Aspiring to go and (actually) going,
In the same way the wise ones should understand
The distinction between these two in their progressive order.

[17] From the bodhicitta of aspiration,
Great fruits arise while still circling (in saṃsāra),
And yet, it does not have the unceasing stream of merit
As does the bodhicitta of application.

[18] From the point of time
When one has genuinely adopted this bodhicitta,
In order to free infinite realms of beings
With a resolve from which one does not turn away,

[19] de-nas bzung-ste[1011] gnyid-log gam //
bag-med-gyur-kyang bsod-nams shugs //
rgyun-mi-'chad-par du-ma-zhig /
nam-mkha' mnyam-par rab-tu-'byung //

[20] 'di-ni 'thad-pa dang bcas-par //
lag-bzangs-kyis[1012] ni zhus-pa las //
dman-mos sems-can don-gyi-phyir //
de-bzhin-gshegs-pa-nyid-kyis gsungs //

[21] sems-can-rnams kyi klad-nad tsam //
bsal-lo snyam-du bsam-na-yang[1013] //
phan-'dogs bsam-pa dang ldan-te[1014] //
bsod-nams dpag-med ldan-gyur-na //

[22] sems-can re-re'i mi-bde-ba //
dpag-tu-med-pa bsal 'dod-cing //
re-re'ang yon-tan dpag-med-du //
bsgrub-par 'dod-pa smos-ci-dgos //

[23] pha 'am yang-na ma-yang rung //
su-la 'di-'dra'i phan-sems yod //
lha dang drang-srong rnams kyang rung //
tshangs-pa la-yang 'di-yod-dam //

[24] sems-can de-dag nyid la sngon //
rang-gi don-du[1015] 'di-'dra'i sems //
rmi-lam-du yang ma rmis-na //
gzhan-gyi don-du ga-la skye //

[25] gzhan-dag rang-gi don-du yang //
mi-'byung sems-can don sems gang //
sems-kyi-rin-chen khyad-par 'di //
snga-na-med-pa'i rmad-cig 'khrungs //

1011 D: deng nas bzung ste; P: de nas gzung ste
1012 D, S: lag bzang gis; Y: lag bzang kyis
1013 D, S: bsams na yang
1014 Y: dang ldan pas
1015 P: rang gi don du'ang

[19] From that moment on,
Even while asleep or inattentive,
An uninterrupted and multifarious force of merit
Arises, equal to the sky.

[20] This (presence of benefits) together with (four) reasons
Is what the Tathāgata himself explained
In (the sūtra) requested by Subāhu
For the benefit of those inclined toward the lesser (paths).

[21] If a person with a helpful intention
Thinks, "I shall merely relieve
The headaches of (a few) beings,"
(And this thought) is (already) endowed with boundless merit,

[22] Then it is needless to mention that
Wishing to dispel the boundless misery of every single being,
And wishing for each of them
To accomplish boundless qualities (also carries boundless merit).

[23] Do even fathers and mothers
Have such a benefiting intention?
Do the gods and sages
Or even Brahma have it?

[24] If those beings have never before
Even dreamed of such an intention
(To attain buddhahood) for their own sake,
How could it ever arise for the sake of others?

[25] (The fact) that this most (exalted) jewel of the mind,
This intention to benefit (all) beings,
Which does not arise in others even for their own sake,
Has (now) taken birth (in my mind) is an unprecedented wonder.

[26] 'gro-ba kun gyi dga'-ba'i rgyu //
sems-can sdug bsngal rtsir-gyur-pa //
rin-chen-sems kyi bsod-nams gang //
de-la ji-ltar gzhal-gyis-lang //

[27] phan-par bsams-pa tsam-gyis-kyang //
sangs-rgyas mchod las khyad-'phags-na //
sems-can ma-lus thams-cad kyi //
bde-don brtson-pa smos-ci-dgos //

[28] sdug-bsngal 'dor 'dod sems yod kyang //
sdug-bsngal-nyid la mngon-par rgyug[1016] /
bde-ba 'dod-kyang gti-mug-pas //
rang-gi bde-ba dgra ltar 'joms //

[29] gang-zhig bde-bas phongs-pa dang //
sdug-bsngal mang-ldan de-dag la //
bde-ba kun gyis tshim-pa dang //
sdug-bsngal thams-cad gcod-byed-cing //

[30] gti-mug-kyang-ni sel-byed-pa //
de dang dge-mtshungs ga-la-yod //
de-'dra'i bshes kyang ga-la-yod //
bsod-nams de-'dra'ang ga-la-yod //

[31] phan-btags lan-ldon[1017] gang-yin-pa //
de-yang re-zhig bsngags-'os-na //
ma-bcol legs-par byed-pa yi //
byang-chub-sems-dpa' smos-ci-dgos /

[32] 'gro-ba nyung-zad nar-ma'i-zas sbyor-ba //
skad-cig zas-tsam sbyin-par-byed-pa dang //
brnyas-bcas nyin-phyed 'grangs-par-byed-pa[1018] yang //
dge-ba-byed-pa yin zhes skye-bos-bkur //

[1016] P: brgyug
[1017] D: lan lon
[1018] D: 'drangs par byed pa

[26] It is the source of happiness for all beings.
It is the panacea for all the suffering of beings.
The totality of merit of this precious intention—
How can it be fathomed?

[27] If a mere benefiting intention
Surpasses presenting offerings to the buddhas,
Then how much more so does striving for the sake of
The happiness of all beings without excluding any?

[28] Although (beings) wish to avoid misery,
They actually run toward misery itself.
Although they want to be happy, out of ignorance
They destroy their own happiness as they would an enemy.

[29] (Bodhicitta) satisfies with all (the varieties of) happiness
And cuts (free) from all suffering
Those who are deprived of happiness
And those endowed with many sorrows.

[30] It clears away even ignorance.
Where is there a comparable virtue?
Where is there ever such a friend?
Where is there merit similar to this (bodhicitta)?

[31] If even a person who returns a favor
Is worthy of being praised to some extent,
Then what need to mention bodhisattvas
Who do good without being asked?

[32] (If) someone who donates food continuously to a few people
And someone who only gives food once,
And even someone who satiates them for half a day in a condescending manner
Is honored by people, saying, "He performs virtue!" (then)

[33] sems-can grangs-mtha'-yas[1019] la dus-ring-du //
bde-bar-gshegs kyi bde-ba bla-na-med //
yid-la-bsam-pa mtha'-dag rdzogs-byed-pa //
rtag-tu sbyin-pa lta-zhig smos-ci-dgos //

[34] gang-zhig de-'dra'i rgyal-sras sbyin-bdag la //
gal-te ngan-sems-skyed-par-byed-pa de[1020] //
ngan-sems-bskyed-pa'i grangs-bzhin bskal-par ni //
dmyal-bar gnas-par-'gyur zhes thub-pas gsungs //

[35] 'on-te gang-zhig yid-rab dang-byed-na //
de-yi 'bras-bu de-bas lhag-par-'phel //
rgyal-sras-rnams la do-gal chen-pos kyang //
sdig-pa mi-'byung dge-ba ngang-gis 'phel //

[36] gang-la sems-kyi-dam-pa rin-chen-de //
skyes-pa de-yi sku la phyag-'tshal-zhing //
gang-la gnod-pa-byas-kyang bde-'brel-ba //
bde-ba'i 'byung-gnas de la skyabs-su-mchi //

byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-spyod-pa-la-'jug-pa las byang-chub-sems kyi phan-yon bshad-pa zhes-bya-ba ste / le'u dang-po'o[1021] //

[1019] D: bgrang mtha' yas
[1020] D: byed na de
[1021] P: byang chub kyi sems kyi phan yon bshad pa ste le'u dang po'o

[33] What need to mention those who always bestow such (a great gift),
The peerless bliss of the sugatas,
For a long period upon boundless multitudes of beings,
(Thus) fulfilling all their wishes?

[34] The Sage has said, "Whoever bears an evil thought
Against such a son of the victors, a benefactor,
Will remain in hell for as many aeons
As the number of his evil thoughts."

[35] But whoever (looks at a bodhisattva) with a devoted mind,
The fruits of this will multiply far more than these (evil thoughts).
Even in greatest adversity, the sons of the victors
Never generate negativity; instead, their virtues naturally increase.

[36] I pay respect to the body of those
In whom this sacred and precious mind has arisen
And who link to happiness even those who have caused them harm.
To that very source of happiness I go for refuge.

From the *Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra*, the first chapter, entitled "Explaining the Benefits of Bodhicitta."

Khenpo Kunpal's Commentary

on the
Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra

Chapter One

Explaining the benefits of bodhicitta

Tibetan and English

[37] byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-spyod-pa-la-'jug-pa'i tshig-'grel 'jam-dbyangs-bla-ma'i-zhal-lung bdud-rtsi'i thig-pa bzhugs so //

[38] na-mo gu-ru mañju-śrī jñā-na satvā-ya[1022] //

[39] bskal-bzang rnam-'dren gzhan las ches dpa'-ba'i /
snying-rjes thugs-bskyed smon-lam rmad-byung-bas //
deng-'dir mngon-par-byang-chub mchog ston-pa'i //
ston-pa mnyam-med shākya-seng-ges skyongs //

[40] mi-pham 'jam-pa'i-dbyangs sogs nye-sras-brgyad //
gnas-brtan-bcu-drug bstan-pa'i-gtad-rabs-bdun //
'dzam-gling-rgyan-mchog zhi-ba'i-lha la-sogs //
'phags-yul paṇ-grub dad-brgyas spyi-bor bsnyen //

[41] rgyal-ba'i lung-bstan gangs-ljongs snang-ba'i mig //
mkhan-slob-chos-rgyal lo-paṇ sprul-pa'i dpyid //
'jam-dbyangs-rnam-gsum la-sogs gsar-rnying gi /
ris-med-brgyud-pa rnams la gus phyag-'tshal //

[42] rgyal-ba kun gyi mkhyen brtse nus-pa'i dpal //
rigs-gsum dbyer-med chos-kyi-dbang-po dang //
rje-btsun bla-ma sangs-rgyas kun dngos rnams //
byang-chub-snying-por snying-gi-pad-mor-rol //

[43] gang-gi zhal-gsung zag-med bdud-rtsi'i bcud //
gang-thob cha-shas yi-ge'i-'du-byed 'dis //
bla-ma mchog dang dkon-mchog rin-po-ches //
bstan dang 'gro la sman-par byin-gyis-rlobs //

1022 A, B: jñā na sa mā ya

Title

[37] A Word-by-Word Commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, called *Drops of Nectar*, according to the Personal Statement of the Mañjughoṣa-like Teacher.

Preface

[38] Homage to the teacher Mañjuśrī, the wisdom being!

[39] More courageous than the other guides of this Fortunate Aeon,
Amazing in your compassionate development of bodhicitta and aspiration,
In this time you demonstrate your supreme, fully manifest enlightenment,
Protect me, incomparable teacher, Lion of the Śākyas!

[40] I place above my head with hundred-fold devotion
The eight close sons, Ajita, Mañjughoṣa, and the others;
The sixteen elders, the seven generations of heirs to the doctrine;
And the paṇḍitas and siddhas of the noble land—
The adornments of Jambudvīpa, the supreme ones, Śāntideva, and others.

[41] I respectfully prostrate to
The eyes that gazed upon the snowy land prophesied by the Victor,
To the preceptor, the master, the dharma king, and the treasure-trove of emanated translators and paṇḍitas,
And to the three Mañjughoṣas and others of the non-sectarian lineages
Of the Old and New Schools.

[42] Splendor of the knowledge, love, and capability of all the victors,
Chökyi Wangpo, inseparable from the (lords of) the three families,
And (other) venerable masters, quintessence of all the buddhas,
Reside in the lotus of my heart until I attain the essence of enlightenment.

[43] May the supreme guru and the precious (three) jewels
Grant their blessings so that this composition of letters, though it is only a fraction
Of the undefiled essential nectar of his explanations,
Will help the doctrine and sentient beings.

[44] de-la-'dir dpal mar-me-mdzad la-sogs-pa'i 'das-pa'i-sangs-rgyas rnams dang / ston mchog mnyam-med shākya-seng-ge la-sogs-pa'i da-ltar-gyi-sangs-rgyas kun dang / rgyal-tshab sems-dpa'-chen-po rje-btsun byams-pa-mgon-po la-sogs-pa'i ma-'ongs-pa'i-sangs-rgyas thams-cad ma-lus shing lus-pa-med-pa'i dus-gsum-gyi-rgyal-ba thams-cad gshegs shing rjes-su-gshegs-pa'i lam-po-che srid-pa-'jig-rten dang zhi-ba-myang-'das kyi phan-bde'i legs-tshogs ma-lus-pa 'byung-ba'i-gnas gcig-pur-gyur-pa rin-chen byang-chub-kyi-sems gtso-bor ston-pa rgyal-sras byang-chub-sems-dpa'i spyod-pa la 'jug-pa'i gzhung bzang yid-bzhin-gyi-nor-bu dbang-gi-rgyal-po las kyang ches lhag-pa 'di-nyid 'chad-par-byed-pa la /

[45] bshad-bya'i-yan-lag bshad-pa dang / bshad-bya-dngos bshad-pa gnyis las /

[46] dang-po bshad-bya'i-yan-lag bshad-pa la gsum ste / slob-dpon gyis chos ji-ltar 'chad-tshul / slob-mas ji-ltar nyan-tshul / dpon-slob gnyis-kas 'chad-nyan ji-ltar bgyi-ba'i tshul-lo //

[47] dang-po slob-dpon gyis chos ji-ltar 'chad-tshul la gsum ste / slob-dpon sangs-rgyas kyis chos ji-ltar 'chad-tshul / slob-dpon dgra-bcom-pas chos ji-ltar 'chad-tshul / slob-dpon mkhas-pa paṇḍi-tas chos ji-ltar 'chad-pa'i-tshul-lo //

[48] dang-po slob-dpon sangs-rgyas kyis cho-'phrul-rnam-pa-gsum gyi sgo-nas 'chad de /

[49] de-yang sku-rdzu-'phrul-gyi-cho-'phrul gyis smin-mtshams kyi mdzod-spu nas 'od-zer bsam-gyis-mi-khyab-par spro-ba sogs kyis gdul-bya 'khor-du-ma-'dus-pa bsdus nas / ljags-kyi-dbang-pos stong-gsum kheb-par-mdzad-pa sogs kyis gdul-bya 'khor-du-'dus-pa-rnams yid-ches-par-mdzad //

[50] thugs-kun-tu-brjod-pa'i-cho-'phrul gyis gdul-bya 'khor-du-'dus-pa de-dag gi blo dang dbang-po bag-la-nyal-ba thams-cad mkhyen-par-mdzad-nas /

[44] Now here, I will explain this excellent text, the *Entering the Conduct of the Bodhisattvas*,[1023] the sons of the victors, (a text) which is even greater than the wish-fulfilling jewel, the king of powers. It primarily elucidates the precious bodhicitta, the sole source of every single accumulation of goodness, both that of the welfare and happiness of existence—saṃsāra—as well as that of peace—nirvāṇa. It is the great path which every one of the victors of the three times, every single one without exception, has traversed and will traverse. That is to say the buddhas of the past, such as glorious Dīpaṃkara and others; all the buddhas of the present, such as our incomparable supreme teacher, the Lion of the Śākyas, and others; and every one of the buddhas of the future, such as the venerable Maitreyanātha, the great being, the regent of the Victor.

[45] To explain (this excellent text), there is the explanation of the prefatory topics and the explanation of the main topics.

The explanation of the prefatory topics

[46] Of these, the first, the explanation of the prefatory topics, has three parts: (1) how a master should expound the dharma; (2) how a student should listen to it; and (3) how both teacher and student should explain and listen.

How a master should expound the dharma

[47] First, how a master should expound the dharma has three parts: (1) how a buddha teacher expounds the dharma; (2) how an arhat teacher expounds the dharma; and (3) how a learned paṇḍita teacher expounds the dharma.

How a buddha teacher expounds the dharma

[48] First, a buddha teacher teaches by means of three types of miraculous display.

[49] With the miraculous display of the magical powers of his body, he emanates inconceivable light rays from the curled hair between his eyebrows, and so on, gathering thereby those beings needing to be tamed who have not yet been assembled as his entourage. Then, he covers a trichiliocosm[1024] with his tongue, and so forth, causing thereby the beings who need to be tamed, and who are now gathered as his entourage, to gain trust.

[50] With the miraculous display of his all-communicating mind, he comes to know totally the minds, capacities, and the latent tendencies of those beings who need to be tamed and who are gathered as his entourage.

1023 Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra

1024 stong gsum means 1.000 to the power of three, which equals one billion single world systems.

[51] gsung-rjes-su-bstan-pa'i-cho-'phrul gyis lha klu sogs 'gro-ba rang-rang gi skad dang mthun-pa'i gsung-dbyangs-yan-lag-drug-cu dang ldan-pa'i sgo-nas gang-la-gang-gis 'dul-ba'i chos de dang de 'chad-pa'o[1025] //

[52] gnyis-pa slob-dpon dgra-bcom-pas dag-pa-gsum la bsten-nas 'chad-de[1026] /

[53] nyan-pa-po'i-snod-dag-pa ni gzhan-sems-shes-pa'i-mngon-shes kyis gdul-bya de yi rgyud la brtags-nas rgyud snod-rung-du-gyur na chos-'chad /

[54] 'chad-pa-po'i-ngag-dag-pa ni chags sogs nyon-mongs-pa'i-sgrib-pa las grol-bas ngag-tshig dri-ma-med-pa brda-dag snyan-pa'i dbyangs kyis 'chad /

[55] gsung-rab-kyi-brjod-bya-dag-pa ni / rang-nyid kyi yongs-'dzin rdzogs-pa'i-sangs-rgyas la-sogs-pa'i zhal-nas ji-ltar gsungs-pa ltar mi-brjed-pa'i-gzungs kyis bzung ste / tshig la lhag-chad dang / don la nor-'khrul-med-par 'chad-pa'o //

[56] 'o-na nyon-thos-dgra-bcom-pa de-dag gis cho-'phrul-rnam-pa-gsum la brten-nas ci'i-phyir mi 'chad ce-na / de-dag la mi-shes-pa'i-rgyu-bzhi yod-pas cho-'phrul-rnam-pa-gsum la brten-nas[1027] 'chad mi nus te /

[57] gnas-kyi-bskal-pas mi-shes-pa 'phags-pa mau'u-'gal-gyi-bu-chen-pos rang-gi ma sangs-rgyas-kyi-zhing 'od-zer-can du skyes-pa ma shes-pa lta-bu /

[58] dus-kyi-bskal-pas mi-shes-pa khyim-bdag-dpal-skyes kyi rgyud la thar-pa'i-sa-bon yod-pa 'phags-pa shā-ri'i-bus ma shes-pa lta-bu /

[59] rgyu-thug-med-kyi-'bras-bu thug-med mi-shes-pa / ji-skad-du /

[60] rma-bya'i-mdongs-bkra[1028] gcig la yang /
rgyu-yi-dbye-ba tha-dad-pa //
de mkhyen-pa ni kun-mkhyen te //
kun-mkhyen-ye-shes min-pas min //

zhes-pa lta-bu'o //

[61] sangs-rgyas-kyi-chos rab-tu-mang-po mi shes-pa ni / stobs-bcu mi-'jigs-pa-bzhi ma-'dres-pa la-sogs-pa med-pa'o //

1025 A, C: chos de dang da 'chad pa'o

1026 A: dag pa gsum bsten nas 'chad de

1027 A: la bsten nas

1028 B: mdangs bkra

[51] Then, with the miraculous display of his universally-corresponding speech, he expounds, through his melodious speech endowed with sixty aspects and in accordance with the individual language of each being—be they gods, nāgas, or others, the respective dharmas for taming whomever by whatever means.

How an arhat teacher expounds the dharma

[52] Second, an arhat teacher expounds (the dharma) based on the three-fold purity as follows.

[53] (1) The pure vessel of the listener. He surveys the minds of those to be tamed with the supernatural perception which knows the minds of others and, if the mind-stream (of the listener) is a suitable vessel, he teaches.

[54] (2) The pure speech of the teacher. Being freed from the obscurations of afflictions such as attachment, and so forth, he teaches with pure speech and proper grammar in a pleasant tone.

[55] (3) The pure topic of the discourse. He remembers with perfect recollection exactly what his own teacher, the perfect Buddha, or others have said, and he teaches without adding or omitting words and without being mistaken with regard to the meaning.

[56] Should you ask, "Why don't those śrāvaka arhats teach through the three miraculous ways?" Well, they are not able to teach through the three miraculous ways because there are four reasons for their ignorance.

[57] (1) They are ignorant with regard to distant places, as for instance the great and noble Maudgalyāyana did not know that his mother was reborn in the buddha field Mārīci.

[58] (2) They are ignorant with regard to distant times, as for instance the noble Śāriputra did not know that there was a seed for liberation in the mind of the householder Śrīja.

[59] (3) They are ignorant with regard to unfathomable results that come from unfathomable causes, as in the statement,

[60] Knowing the various distinct causes
Of even a single colored spot on a peacock's feather,
He is the Omniscient One.
Except for the wisdom of the Omniscient One, it is not known.

[61] (4) They are ignorant with regard to most of the Buddha's qualities. That is to say they lack the ten powers, the four fearlessnesses, the non-associated qualities, and so forth.

[62] gsum-pa / slob-dpon mkhas-pa paṇḍi-tas chos ji-ltar 'chad-tshul la gnyis / chos-kyi-'byung-gnas rgya-gar 'phags-pa'i-yul na yongs-su-grags-pa'i gtsug-lag-khang chen-po rnam-pa gnyis yod-pa'i /

[63] dpal nā-len-dra'i[1029] gtsug-lag-khang na bzhugs-pa'i paṇḍi-ta rnams kyis ni bka' thams-cad phun-sum-tshogs-pa-lnga dang / bstan-bcos thams-cad rtsis-'go-yan-lag-lnga'i sgo-nas 'chad //

[64] bi-kra-ma-shī-la'i gtsug-lag-khang na bzhugs-pa'i paṇḍi-ta rnams kyis nyan-pa-po snod-rung-bya-ba dang / bstan-pa'i-rnam-bzhag nges-pa-gnyis kyi sgo-nas 'chad /

[65] de gnyis las 'dir snga-'gyur-pa-rnams[1030] dpal-mgon 'phags-pa klu-sgrub dang / pad-ma-sam-bha-va'i rjes-su-'brangs-te bstan-bcos chen-po byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-spyod-pa-la-'jug-pa 'di-nyid rtsis-'go-yan-lag-lnga'i sgo-nas 'chad-pa la /

[66] mdzad-pa-po sus mdzad //

lung gang-nas btus /

phyogs gang-du gtogs /

dbu-nas-zhabs-su bsdus-pa'i-don gang-yin /

dgos-ched su-zhig-gi don du mdzad ce-na /

[67] dang-po mdzad-pa-po ni / bstan-bcos brtsom-pa'i-rgyu-gsum legs-par tshang zhing khyad-par-du lhag-pa'i-lha rje-btsun 'jam-pa'i-dbyangs kyis rjes-su-bzung-zhing byin-gyis-rlabs-pa[1031] sogs ngo-mtshar-ba'i-gtam-bdun gyi rnam-thar mchog gis spud-pa'i paṇḍi-ta chen-po 'phags-pa rgyal-sras zhi-ba-lhas mdzad // de-yang /

[68] lhag-pa'i-lha mnyes nā-len-dra'i[1032] /
bkod-pa phun-tshogs rtsod-pa bzlog //
ya-mtshan-can dang sprang-po dang /
rgyal-po mu-stegs-can btul-ba'o //

zhes-pa ltar /

1029 A: dpal na len ḍa'i

1030 B: snga 'gyur ba rnams

1031 B: byin gyis brlabs pa

1032 A: na len ḍa'i

How a learned paṇḍita teacher expounds the dharma

[62] Third, concerning how a learned paṇḍita teacher expounds the dharma, there are two (styles). In the noble land of India, the place of the dharma's origin, there were the two widely-renowned, great monasteries.

[63] The paṇḍitas who lived at glorious Nālandā monastery explained every word (of the Buddha) by means of the 'five-fold excellence' and every treatise by means of the 'five types of preliminary assessment'.

[64] The paṇḍitas who lived at Vikramaśīla monastery (first) 'transformed the listeners into proper vessels' and then taught the exposition of the doctrine by means of the 'twofold certainty'.

[65] Of these two (styles), the people of the Old Translation School follow the glorious guardian, noble Nāgārjuna, as well as Padmasambhava, and explain this great treatise, the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, through the five types of preliminary assessment.

[66] Were one to ask, they are:

(1) Which author composed (the treatise)?

(2) Upon which scriptures does it draw?

(3) Under which category is it classified?

(4) What is its brief meaning from beginning to end?

(5) For whose benefit and for what purpose was it composed?

[67] First (assessment), the author: (The treatise) was composed by the great paṇḍita, the noble son of the victors, Śāntideva, who is adorned with a supreme life story in seven amazing episodes, such as how he excellently completed the three criteria for composing a treatise, and in particular how he was looked after and blessed by his supreme meditation deity, the venerable Mañjughoṣa. As it is said:

[68] (1) Pleasing his supreme meditation deity;
(2) His perfect display of activity at Nālandā; (3) preventing a war;
(4) And taming those who held strange views, (5) beggars,
(6) The king, and (7) the tīrthikas.[1033]

[1033] The Sanskrit word tīrthika is often translated as 'heretic', but tīrthika in fact refers to someone who is on a path other than the Buddhist one.

[69] bdag-nyid-chen-po 'di lho-phyogs-kyi-rgyud kyi yul-'khor-bzang-po zhes-bya-ba rgyal-po dge-ba'i-go-cha zhes-bya-ba'i sras zhi-ba'i-go-cha zhes-bya-bar gyur-cing / de-yang gzhon-nu'i-tshe-nas sngon-gyi-rgyal-ba la bya-ba-byas-shing[1034] / theg-chen-gyi-rigs-la-gnas-pas bla-ma dang dge-sbyong sogs la gus-pa dang / blon-po dang 'bangs-'khor rnams la phan-'dogs-pa dang / phongs-pa dang nad-pa sogs dman-pa rnams kyang snying-rjes lhag-par skyong-ba la-sogs-pa byang-chub-kyi-spyod-pa[1035] 'ba'-zhig la thugs-gzhol-ba'i ngang-nas rig-pa dang sgyu-rtsal thams-cad la yang mkhas-par-gyur cing khyad-par[1036] ku-su-lu zhig la 'jam-dpal-rnon-po'i-sgrub-thabs shig zhus-te bsgrub-pas[1037] zhal-mthong /

[70] re-zhig-na yab rgyal-po 'das-te rgyal-por-dbang-bskur-bar bsgros-te / rin-po-che'i khri chen-po bshams-pa na de nub rmi-lam du sang-nyin sdod-pa'i khri chen-po de la rje-btsun 'jam-pa'i-dbyangs bzhugs-nas /

[71] bu gcig 'di-ni nga-yi stan yin-te /
nga ni khyod-kyi dge-ba'i-bshes-gnyen yin /
nga dang khyod gnyis stan-gcig la 'dug-pa /
'di-ni rnam-pa-kun-tu rigs-ma-yin //

zhes gsungs-pa

[72] rmis-pas sad-pa dang / rgyal-srid-'dzin-du-mi-rung-bar dgongs-te / rgyal-srid kyi 'byor-ba[1038] chen-po la ma chags-par bros-nas dpal nā-len-dra'i[1039] paṇḍi-ta lnga-brgya'i khyu-mchog rgyal-ba'i-lha las rab-tu-byung-ste/ mtshan yang zhi-ba'i-lha zhes btags-te /

[73] nang-gi-kun-spyod 'phags-pa la sde-snod-gsum gsan-nas de'i-don la mnyam-par-'jog-par-mdzad-cing shin-tu gces-pa'i-don rnams phyogs-gcig-tu-bsdus-pa bslab-btus dang / mdo-btus kyi bstan-bcos-mdzad-pa sogs spangs-rtogs-kyi-yon-tan dpag-tu-med-pa mnga' yang gzhan-dag-gis de-ltar ma rtogs-par /

[74] phyi'i-spyod-pa la bhukta za-ba[1040] / susta nyal-ba / kucchiva 'chag-pa gsum las gzhan mi byed-par snang-bas bhu-su-ku-va zhes bsgrags shing

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[1034] B: sngon gyi rgyal ba la phyag byas shing

[1035] T: byang sems kyi spyod pa

[1036] A: mkhas par gyur cig byad par ; B: khyad par du

[1037] B: bsgrubs pas

[1038] B: 'byor pa

[1039] C: nā lenḍa'i

[1040] B: phyi'i spyod pa bhukta za ba

[69] (First episode) This great being (Śāntideva) was born in Saurāṣṭra, a southern province, as the son of King Kalyāṇavarnam and was named Śāntivarnam. From the time of his youth onward, paying homage to the former victors and being inclined toward the Mahāyāna family, he was respectful to gurus and practitioners, helpful to his entourage of ministers and subjects, and especially cared with compassion also for the disadvantaged such as poor and sick people, and so on. While thus devoting himself exclusively to the conduct of a bodhisattva, he also became learned in all sciences and arts, and in particular, he requested the sādhana of Tikṣṇa-Mañjuśrī from a beggar yogin; after practicing it, he beheld a vision (of that deity).

[70] On one occasion after his father, the king, had passed away, discussion was held about (Śāntivarnam) being empowered as the successor to the throne, and so a great jewel throne was arranged. That night he dreamed that the venerable Mañjughoṣa was dwelling on the great throne upon which he was to sit the next day. Mañjughoṣa spoke thus:

[71] My only son, this is my seat,
And I am your spiritual guide.
Under no circumstances would it be correct
For you and me to share the same seat.

[72] Waking from the dream, and thinking it would be improper to rule the kingdom, he fled without attachment to the great wealth of the kingdom and was ordained by Jayadeva,[1041] chief of the five hundred paṇḍitas of Nālandā, and was given the name Śāntideva.

[73] (Second episode) Concerning his internal conduct, he studied the tripiṭaka with the Noble One[1042] then meditated upon its meaning. Condensing the most important points (of the tripiṭaka), he composed the treatises *Śikṣā-samuccaya* and *Sūtra-samuccaya*. Although he was endowed with such unfathomable qualities of renunciation and realization, the other (monks) knew nothing about it.

[74] Concerning his external conduct, he appeared to do nothing except bhukta (which is Sanskrit for) eating, susta (which is Sanskrit for) sleeping, and kucciva (which is Sanskrit for) strolling around. Therefore, he became known as 'Bhusukuva', 'the one who just eats, sleeps, and strolls around'.[1043]

1041 For biographical notes on Jayadeva [rgyal ba'i lha] see *Tāranātha's History of Buddhism*, pages 197-198, 214, 217.

1042 Either Jayadeva or Mañjuśrī.

1043 read: za ba, skr. bhuñjāno; nyal ba, skr. supto; and 'chag pa, skr. kuṭīṃ gata.

[75] phyi'i-spyod-pa la dpag-nas 'di'i rab-tu-byung-ba-rnams kyi bya-ba'i-las 'khor-lo-gsum yin-na / 'dis gang-yang mi byed-par dge-'dun-gyi-nang-du dad-zas byin-pa la longs-spyod-par mi-rung-bas bskrad-par-bya'o zhes bsgros-nas

[76] gsung-rab-kyi-mdo-'don[1044] res-byas-pas rang-thad-la-bab-pa-na gzhan-du-'gro'o snyam-du-bsam-nas[1045] de-la mdo-'don-par yang-yang nan-gyis zhus-pa la bdag-gis ci-yang-mi-shes-so zhes yang-yang gsungs-pa na / mkhan-po la nyid-kyis bsgos-shig[1046] ces zhus-pas mkhan-pos bsgos-bas 'don-par khas-blangs-pa[1047] dang /

[77] kha-cig gis 'di ci-yin[1048] mi-shes-snyam-du the-tshom-du-gyur bzhin-du / de nyams-sad-pa'i-phyir gtsug-lag-khang gi phyi-rol sa-phyogs yangs-par mchod-pa mang-po bshams-shing skye-bo'i-tshogs mang-po 'dus-pa'i-dbus-su seng-ge'i-khri mthon-po bshams-pa la spyan-drangs te khri der ji-ltar byon ma shes-par steng-du bzhugs-pa la phal-cher yid-gnyis-su-gyur-pa la /

[78] de-nas sngar drang-srong-gis gsungs-pa grags-pa-zhig gdon nam / sngar-ma-grags-pa-zhig gdon zhes gsungs-pa-na thams-cad ngo-mtshar-du-gyur-te / ma-grags-pa-zhig 'don-par-zhus-pas /

[79] bslab-btus ni mang / mdo-btus ni nyung / tshig-bsdus la don-rgyas-pa byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-spyod-pa-la-'jug-pa 'di zhal-'don-mdzad-pa dang / 'phags-pa 'jam-dpal yang mdun-gyi-nam-mkha' la bzhugs-pa skye-bo mang-pos mthong-nas shin-tu dad-pa-gyur-pa las / shes-rab-gyi-le'u'i / gang-tshe dngos dang dngos-med dag / ces-pa-nas slob-dpon 'jam-dbyangs dang bcas-pa nam-mkha' la je-mtho-je-mthor-song-nas mthar sku mi-snang-bar gsungs[1049] grags-pa'i sgo-nas rdzogs-par-bton-ste[1050] gshegs-so //

[80] de-nas gzungs-thob-pa-rnams kyis ji-ltar zin-pa bsdus-pas shlo-ka bdun-brgya dang / stong dang stong las lhag-par-gyur cing / paṇḍi-ta kha-che-ba-rnams kyis bsdus-pa le'u dgu'i bdag-nyid shlo-ka bdun-brgya dang / yul-dbus-pa-rnams kyis bsdus-pa le'u bcu'i bdag-nyid shlo-ka stong yod-pa ma mthun-pas the-tshom-du-gyur-cing /

1044 A, C: gsungs rab kyi mdo 'don

1045 B: bsams nas

1046 B: mkhan pa nyid kyis bsgos shig

1047 A: blangs ba

1048 B: ci yin na

1049 B: gsung

1050 B: rdzogs par ston te

[75] (The other monks) scrutinized his external conduct and discussed it, saying, "The activities of ordained monks are the three wheels (of conduct), but as this one (Śāntideva) does not do them at all, it is not proper that he eats the food devotees offer to the saṃgha. Therefore, he must be expelled!"

[76] Thinking, "We take turns in (public) recitals of the sūtra scriptures; when his turn comes, he will run away." Again and again, they insistently requested that he recite the sūtras. As he repeatedly answered, "I don't know anything at all," (the monks) said to the preceptor (Jayadeva), "You yourself must command him (to do it)!" Consequently, the preceptor did command him, and he (Śāntideva) agreed to recite (the sūtras).

[77] Some (monks) thought suspiciously, "We have no idea what he is up to." In order to put him to the test, they arranged many offerings on the vast ground outside the monastery and set up a towering lion throne in the midst of a huge crowd of people who had been gathered. When they called for (Śāntideva), most people were startled to find him already sitting on top (of the throne), not knowing how he had ascended it.

[78] (Śāntideva) asked, "Should I recite something well known, something that was previously taught by the Ṛṣi,[1051] or should I recite something never heard before?" Surprised, all of them requested, "Please recite something not yet heard."

[79] As the *Śikṣā-samuccaya* was too extensive and the *Sūtra-samuccaya* too short, he recited the *Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra*, which was concise in words yet vast in meaning. At the same time, many people saw the noble Mañjuśrī dwelling before them in the sky and became very devoted. While reciting (the words) "When neither an 'entity' nor a 'non-entity' …" from the chapter on knowledge, the master (Śāntideva) together with Mañjughoṣa rose higher and higher into the sky, until finally his body became invisible, and he then completed the teaching with the sound of his voice (alone).

[80] When those (paṇḍitas) who had attained perfect recall put together what they could remember, some came up with seven hundred stanzas, some with one thousand, and some with even more than a thousand. The paṇḍitas from Kashmir produced a compilation of seven hundred stanzas in nine chapters, and those from the Central Land[1052] produced a compilation of one thousand stanzas in ten chapters. Their lack of agreement led to doubts.

1051 An epithet for the Buddha

1052 yul dbus pa, skr. madhyadeśa

[81] bslab-pa-kun-las-btus-pa la /
nges-par yang-dang-yang-du blta /

zhes dang /

yang-na re-zhig mdor-bsdus-pa'i //
mdo rnams kun-las-btus-par blta //

zhes-pa'ang ma shes-pas

[82] slob-dpon lho-phyogs mchod-rten-dpal-yon-can na bzhugs-par thos-nas gzungs-thob-pa'i-paṇḍi-ta gnyis spyan-'dren-du-phyin-pas mjal-nas byon-du-ma-btub-kyang

[83] tshul-de-dag zhus-pa la gzhung-gi-tshad yul-dbus-pa-rnams kyis bsdus-pa ltar yin la bslab-btus dang / mdo-btus gnyis kho-bo'i brang-khang-gi gdung-gseb-na paṇḍi-ta'i yi-ge-phra-mo'i bris-pa-zhig yod-pas ltos-shig ces rjes-su-bstan-cing de-dag gi bshad-lung yang gnang-ngo //

[84] de-nas shar-phyogs-su byon-te rtsod-pa chen-po byed-pa zhig-gi 'gran-zla-mdzad-pa'i rdzu-'phrul gyis 'dum-par-gyur-te bde-ba la bkod-do //

[85] yang yul-ma-ga-dha'i nub-phyogs ha-cang-mi-ring-ba zhig na ya-mtshan-can-gyi-lta-ba-'dzin-pa lnga-brgya gnas-pa 'khor-du-bsdus-pa dang / re-zhig-na[1053] yul-ngan-chen-po byung-nas bza'-btung-chad-de nyon-mongs-pa-na bdag-cag gi 'tsho-ba-sgrub nus-pa yod-na de'i gsungs[1054] spyi-bor-len-to // zhes zer-ba la /

[86] slob-dpon gyis 'bras-chan lhung-bzed gang-tsam-gyi bsod-snyoms-blangs-te ting-nge-'dzin gyis mang-por byin-gyis-brlabs-nas de thams-cad bde-bas tshim-par-mdzad-de ya-mtshan-gyi-lta-ba las bzlog-ste sangs-rgyas-kyi-bstan-pa la btsud-par-mdzad-do //

[87] de-nas re-zhig-na mu-ge chen-po byung-ste sprang-po stong-tsam-zhig bru-ba-tsha-bas nyen-te / 'chi-la-thug-pa-rnams la slob-dpon gyis 'tsho-ba-sbyar-te bde-ba la bkod-do //

1053 B: re zhig

1054 B: gsung

[81] Moreover, they did not understand (the words):[1055]

> I will definitely read again and again
> The *Śikṣā-samuccaya*…

and,

> Alternatively, I will sometimes look at
> At the condensed *Sūtra-samuccaya*.[1056]

[82] Therefore, when they heard that the master was dwelling in the South at the Śrīdakṣiṇa Stūpa, two paṇḍitas who had attained perfect recall went to invite him (to come to Nālandā). However, when they met him, it was not convenient for him to return.

[83] Nonetheless, when they reported the situation to him, he said, "The length of the text corresponds to the compilation of those from the Central Land. Both the *Śikṣā-samuccaya* and the *Sūtra-samuccya*, written in the fine script of the paṇḍitas, are in between the rafters of my room (at Nālandā). Look there!" After he had thus instructed them, he gave them explanations and reading transmissions for those (texts).

[84] (Third episode) Next, (Śāntideva) went to the East, where, through his miraculous powers, he took part in a major conflict, reconciled (the parties), and brought them to happiness.

[85] (Fourth episode) Then again, he took as his students five hundred (people) who held strange views[1057] and were dwelling in the western part of Magadha, not very far away. At some point, a great famine arose so that there was neither food nor drink. Suffering (from this), they said, "If there is someone who has the power to supply us with food, we will respect his teachings."

[86] The master collected alms, just enough to fill his begging bowl with rice gruel. Then, with his samādhi he blessed it so that it multiplied, and thus he satisfied them all. This turned them away from their strange views and caused them to enter into the doctrine of the Buddha.

[87] (Fifth episode) At another time, a great famine had arisen and about one thousand beggars were tormented by hunger. The master supplied those close to death with food and established them in happiness.

1055 stanza 105 and text section 264, fifth chapter of the *Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra*.

1056 stanza 106 and text section 265, fifth chapter of the *Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra*.

1057 ya mtshan gyi lta ba; skr. pāṣaṇḍika.

[88] de-nas shar-phyogs-su a-ti-sha-ba'i-rgyal-po la / ma-tsa-la'i-gnod-par-byed-pa[1058] bsrung-ba'i rgyal-po'i (ma ga dha'i / mchan) sku-bsrung-mdzad-pa la / slob-dpon rje-btsun-'jam-pa'i-dbyangs kyi phyag-rgyar bcing-ba'i shing-gi ral-gri shubs dang bcas-pa zhig bzung-nas chos-kyi-mthu phun-sum-tshogs-pa dang ldan-pa'i phyir-rgol-ba-rnams zil-gyis-mnan-te skye-dgu-thams-cad bde-bar-mdzad-pas bkur-sti chen-po thob-pa-na / phrag-dog-can gzhan-dag-gis ma-bzod-par rgyal-po la mi 'di ni g.yo-sgyu-can zhig ste mtshon-cha yang shing-gi ral-gri las med-pa'i-phyir rgyal-po'i sku-bsrung mi-nus-pas brtag-par-'tshal-lo / zhes zhus-pa dang /

[89] rgyal-po khros-te thams-cad kyi mtshon-cha la rim-gyis bltas-te / de la ral-gri-phyungs-shig ces smras-pa-na / lha-nyid la gnod-par-'gyur-bas[1059] mi-rung-ngo zhes gsungs-pa-na gnod-kyang sla'i[1060] nges-par phyugs-shig zer-ba la /

[90] 'o-na phyogs-dben-par spyan ya-gcig phyag-gis bkab-ste ya-gcig gis gzigs-su-gsol zhes smras-nas phyung-bas de'i gzi-brjid kyis rgyal-po'i mig ya-gcig sa-la lhung-ste dpung dang bcas-pa skrag-nas bzod-par-gsol-te skyabs-su-song-ba las mig-gi bu-gar mig bcug nas zug-rngu-med-cing mthong-bar byin-gyis-rlabs-pas 'jig-rten thams-cad dad-par-mdzad-cing chos la btsud-do //

[91] de-nas dpal-gyi-ri'i lho-phyogs-su byon-te u-tsa-ma'i-spyod-pa zhes-pa sprang-po'i cha-byad gcer-bu khrud-ma pho-ba'i tshig mas 'tsho-bar-byed-pa na[1061] / kha-tri-bi-ha-ra'i bran-mo ka-tsa-la nas khrud-ma-pho-ba'i-chu-'thor-ba slob-dpon[1062] la phog-pas lcags-bsreg la phog-pa ltar 'bar-zhing khol-bar-gyur-pa mthong-ste /

[92] de'i-tshe mu-stegs-pa'i-ston-pa shing-ka-ra-de-ba[1063] zhes-bya-ba'i kho-bos nam-mkha' la dbang-phyug-chen-po'i dkyil-'khor bri-yi-de nang-pa-dag-gis bshig ma nus-na / nang-pa'i-lha-rten chos thams-cad mer-bsreg-ste phyi-rol-mu-stegs-pa'i sgor-'jug dgos zhes rgyal-po la gsol-bas / rgyal-pos kyang nang-pa'i-dge-'dun rnams bsdus-te don-te-zhus-pas[1064] sus-kyang bshigs-par khas-len ma nus-pas

[93] rgyal-po mya-ngan-du-gyur-pa la bran-mo'i sngar-mthong-ba-de zhus-pa na / de tshol-cig gsungs-nas phyogs-kun-tu btsal-bas shing-sdong gcig gi drung-nas rnyed-pa la don-de zhus-pa-na nga-yis-nus-kyi chus-bum-pa-gang dang ras-yug-gnyis dang me rnams sta-gon-gyis-shig gsungs-nas de-ltar byas-so /

1058 B: ma tsa la'i gnod pa byed pa; C: ma tsa les gnod par byed pa

1059 B: gnod pa 'gyur bas

1060 B: sla yi

1061 C: khrud ma phos pa'i tshigs 'tsho-bar-byed-pa na

1062 B: chu 'thor slob dpon

1063 C: shing kar de ba

1064 B: dge 'dun rnams bsdus te zhus pas

[88] (Sixth episode) Next, he worked as a bodyguard of King Atiśava[1065] to the East in order to protect him from the attacks of Macala.[1066] The master took a wooden sword in its scabbard and held it in the mudra of the venerable Mañjughoṣa. Having the perfect power of the dharma, he overcame the attackers. Thus, bringing happiness to every one of the nine types of beings,[1067] he received great honors. Some jealous people who could not bear it said to the king, "This man is an imposter! He has only a wooden sword for a weapon; he cannot guard the king! Please investigate him!"

[89] The king became upset and examined everyone's weapons, one by one. When he commanded, "Draw your sword!" (The master) replied, "It would be wrong to do so as this would injure your majesty." (The king) said, "It doesn't matter if it causes harm. Definitely draw it!"

[90] (The master) replied, "Well, at a remote place, please cover one eye with your hand, and watch with the other." When he drew (the sword), its radiance caused one of the king's eyes to fall to the ground. (The king) and his entourage became frightened; they begged for mercy and took refuge. Then (the master) placed the eye back in the eye socket and blessed (the king) to be without pain and be able to see again. Thus, he caused everyone in the region to gain faith and to enter the dharma.

[91] (Seventh episode) Then he went to Śrīparvata in the South. (Going) naked in the manner of a beggar, which is known as the Uccuṣma conduct, he lived on the leavings of thrown-out dishwater. When Kacala,[1068] the woman-servant of (king) Khatrivihā-ra,[1069] threw out the dishwater, it splashed on the master, and she noticed that it sizzled and boiled like (water) splashed on red hot iron.

[92] At the time, a tīrthika teacher called Śiṃkaradeva[1070] told the king, "I am going to paint a maṇḍala of Maheśvara in the sky. If the Buddhists cannot destroy it, all Buddhist representations and scriptures will be burned and they must convert to (the doctrine of) the non-Buddhist tīrthikas." When the king summoned together the Buddhist saṃgha and informed them (of this), no one was able to claim that he could destroy (the maṇḍala).

[93] The king was devastated. However, when the woman-servant (Kacala) informed him of what she had recently seen, he commanded, "Find him!" Searching everywhere, they found him (Śāntideva) seated at the foot of a tree. When they explained the situation to him, he replied, "I can do it, but prepare a vase filled with water, two lengths of cloth, and a fire!" They did as they were told.

1065 Ariviśana in Magadha.

1066 The meaning of the phrase 'attacks of Macala' [ma tsa la'i gnod pa byed pa] is not clear.

1067 See *Illuminator*.

1068 bu ston chos 'byung reads Kacalahā.

1069 *bu ston chos 'byung* suggests Khativihāra.

1070 *bu ston chos 'byung* reads Śaṃkaradeva.

[94] de-nas sang-gi-dgong-mo[1071] kho-rang-gis nam-mkhar thig-btab-ste song-bas thams-cad the-tshom-du-gyur / nyin-phyi-ma'i snga-dror[1072] dkyil-'khor-bris-te shar-sgo-tsam-zin-pa-na slob-dpon-gyis ting-nge-'dzin-la mnyam-par-bzhag-pa tsam-gyis rlung-gi-'tshub-ma chen-po langs-te dkyil-'khor rmang-med-par khyer-te / rtsva dang shing dang / grong-khyer thams-cad kyang 'gyel-la-ma-'gyel-la-thug-par-gyur-te[1073] / der tshogs-pa'i mi rnams kyang bdas[1074] / mu-stegs-kyi-ston-pa yang rnam-par-'thor rlung-gis bdas-pa'i[1075] bye'u bzhin-du mun-pa chen-por gyur-to /

[95] de-nas slob-dpon-gyis smin-mtshams-nas 'od byung-nas rgyal-po dang btsun-mo la lam-bstan-nas gos dang bral zhing rdul gyis g.yogs-pas shin-tu grang-bar-gyur-pa la mes dro-bar-byas-shing chus bkrus-nas gos-kyis brgyan-par-byas-te[1076] bde-bar-byas-so /

[96] slar-yang ting-nge-'dzin gyis mdun-du bkug-pa la khrus dang byug-pa dang gos byin-pa la-sogs-pas bde-bar-byas-nas mu-stegs-can mang-po sangs-rgyas-kyi-bstan-pa la bcug cing mu-stegs kyi lha-khang rnams bshigs-te[1077] nang-pa-sangs-rgyas-pa'i-chos kyi gtsug-lag kyang dar-zhing rgyas-la yun-ring-du gnas-par-mdzad-pas der mu-stegs pham-pa'i-yul zhes grags-so //

[97] slob-dpon 'dis rang-nyid so-skye yin-par zhal-gyis-bzhes kyang / 'jam-dbyangs sprul-pa zhi-ba'i-lha / zhes dze-tā-ris 'jam-pa'i-dbyangs kyi rnam-par-'phrul-par gsungs-pa dang / 'phags-pa zhi-ba'i-lha nyid kyis zhes shes-rab-'byung-gnas kyis 'phags-pa'i-gang-zag tu gsungs-pa dang /

> rgyal-ba'i-bstan la bdag-nyid-che //
> skyes-bu mang-du byon mod-kyi //
> zhi-ba-lha yi mdzad-pa 'dra[1078] //
> nyams dang dgongs-pa can mi rnyed //

ces bi-bhu-ti-tsan-dras[1079] mdzad-pa phun-sum-tshogs-pa can du gsungs-pa dang /

slob-dpon nag-po-pas 'jam-dpal-dbyangs kyi zhabs-kyi-pad-mo la spyi-bos[1080] gtugs-par gsungs-pa la-sogs-pa'i yon-tan dpag-tu-med-pa dang ldan-pa'o //

1071 A, C: dgongs mo

1072 A, C: snga gror

1073 A, C: 'gyel lam 'gyel la thug par gyur te /

1074 A, C: brdas

1075 A, C: brdas pa'i

1076 B: gos brgyan par byas te

1077 B: bshig ste

1078 Compare with text section 182: zhi ba lha dang 'dra ba yi

1079 A: bi bhu ti tsan ḍas

1080 A, C: spyi bo'i

[94] On the evening of the following day, he (Śiṃkaradeva) drew a (maṇḍala) outline in the sky and left. Everyone began to worry. The next morning, he drew the maṇḍala and was just completing the Eastern (and final) gate, when the master, by merely resting in samādhi, caused a huge windstorm to arise, carrying the maṇḍala away without a trace remaining. Even the grass, trees, and towns were on the brink of being swept away, and the people who lived there were put to flight. The tīrthika teacher was also completely enveloped by the wind and carried off, like a little bird, and a great darkness fell.

[95] Then, from the point between the eyebrows of the master, a light emerged, showing a way for the king and the queen (to escape). Stripped of their clothes and covered with dust, they were freezing cold. He warmed them with fire, washed them with water, covered them in garments, and comforted them.

[96] Further, with his samādhi he gathered (the rest of the people) in front of him and comforted them by bathing, anointing, clothing them, and so on. He caused many tīrthikas to enter into the doctrine of the buddha, demolished the temples of the tīrthikas, caused the temples of the Buddhist dharma to flourish and increase, and thus made (the buddha dharma) remain for a long time. Therefore, this country was known as 'the country where the tīrthikas were defeated'.

[97] Although this master said, "I am an ordinary being," he was (in fact) endowed with unfathomable qualities. He was considered an emanation of Mañjughoṣa, since Jetāri spoke of him as 'Śāntideva, the emanation of Mañjughoṣa'. And he was considered a noble being, since Prajñākaramati spoke of him as 'the noble Śāntideva'.[1081] And Vibhūticandra spoke of him as someone with perfect activities, saying:[1082]

> In the (history of) the Victor's doctrine
> Many great beings and persons have appeared,
> But I have found none whose
> Experience and realization compare with Śāntideva's conduct.[1083]

And, master Kṛṣṇa(pāda) spoke of him, saying,[1084] "He who touched the crown of his head to the lotus at Mañjuśrīghoṣa's feet…"

1081 See *sher 'byung bka' 'grel*, page 1, folio 45b5.

1082 See *vibhūti dgongs 'grel*, page 236, folio 229b3.

1083 Compare with text section 182 where the word 'conduct' does not appear in the Tibetan.

1084 See *kṛṣṇa dka' gnas*, page 186, folio 106b1.

[98] slob-dpon 'dis rgyas-par ston-pa bslab-btus dang / bsdus-te ston-pa[1085] mdo-btus / don-rgyas la tshig-bsdus-pa spyod-'jug dang gsum mdzad-pa las / spyod-'jug 'di la rgya-gar na 'grel-pa[1086] brgya-rtsa-brgyad yod-par grags / zhes gsungs /

[99] lung gang-nas btus-na / sangs-rgyas kyi gsung-rab sde-snod-gsum dang / khyad-par mdo-sde kho-na las btus /

[100] phyogs gang-du gtogs na / spyir theg-pa-che-chung-gnyis las theg-pa-chen-po'i phyogs-su-gtogs la / theg-chen-mdo-sngags-gnyis las mdo'i phyogs-su-gtogs-so //

[101] dbu-nas-zhabs-su bsdus-pa'i don gang-yin zhe-na / bsam-pa byang-chub-mchog-tu-sems-bskyed-pa dang / sbyor-ba pha-rol-tu-phyin-pa-drug[1087] la slob-tshul rgyas-par bshad-pa'o /

[102] dgos-ched su-zhig-gi don du mdzad ce-na / spyir sems-can thams-cad dang / sgos[1088] dpal nā-len-dra'i paṇḍi-ta[1089] lnga-brgyas byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-lam tshangs-la ma-nor-ba nyams-su-len shes-pa'i don-du mdzad-pa-ste /

de-ltar rtsis-'go-yan-lag-lngas gtan-la-phab-pas nyan-pa-po yid-ches-thob-nas chos-kyi-snod-rung-du-'gyur-ba'i dgos-pa yod-pa'o //

[103] gnyis-pa slob-mas ji-ltar nyan-pa'i-tshul la / kun-slong dang / kun-spyod gnyis[1090] /

[104] dang-po / skyes-bu-chen-po'i kun-slong bsod-nams tshad-med-pa'i 'jug-ngogs rin-chen byang-chub-sems kyi rtsis-zin-par-bya-ba ste / 'di-ltar 'khor-ba na gnas-pa'i sems-can thams-cad thog-ma-med-pa'i dus-nas pha-mar-ma-gyur-pa-med la / pha-mar-gyur-pa'i dus-su da-lta'i pha-ma bzhin-du drin-chen-pos bskyangs-te zas-kyi-phud byin / gos-kyi-rtses g.yogs / shin-tu byams-pas bskyed-bsrings-pa'i drin-chen sha-stag yin la /

1085 B: bstan pa

1086 A: 'grel ba

1087 A, B, C: pha rol du phyin pa drug

1088 A, C: dgos

1089 A, B: nā len dra'i paṇḍi ta

1090 B: gnyis las

[98] This master (Śāntideva) composed three (texts): the *Śikṣā-samuccaya* which teaches in an extensive way; the *Sūtra-samuccya* which teaches in an abbreviated way; and the *Caryāvatāra*,[1091] which is vast in meaning yet concise in words. Among these (texts), this *Caryāvatāra* was famous in India for its one hundred and eight commentaries.

[99] (Second assessment): Upon which scriptures does it draw? (The *Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra*) draws upon the tripiṭaka, the scriptures of the Buddha in general, and in particular, exclusively upon the sūtra-piṭaka.

[100] (Third assessment): Under which category is it classified? Generally, there are two (vehicles), the greater and the lesser. Of them, (the *Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra*) is classified under the category of Mahāyāna. Mahāyāna has two (vehicles), sūtra and mantra; of them, it is classified under the category of sūtra.

[101] (Fourth assessment): What is its brief meaning from beginning to end? (The *Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra*) explains in great detail how to train in the motivation, (which is) the generation of supreme bodhicitta, and in the application, (which is) the six transcendental perfections.

[102] (Fifth assessment): For whose benefit and for what purpose was it composed? (The *Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra*) was composed to benefit all sentient beings in general, and in particular, so that the five hundred paṇḍitas of glorious Nālandā could understand how to practice the way of the bodhisattvas in a complete and unmistaken fashion.

Settling the five assessments in this way serves the purpose of allowing the listeners to gain trust and thus become proper vessels for (receiving) the dharma.

How a student should listen

[103] Second, how a student should listen (to the dharma) has two (parts): motivation and conduct.

Motivation

[104] First, the motivation of a great person must be embraced with the precious bodhicitta, the entrance way to immeasurable merit. One should contemplate, "All of the sentient beings who have lived in saṃsāra have, since time without beginning, been my mothers and fathers. When they were my mothers and fathers, they cared for me with great kindness just as my present mother and father have. They fed me with the best food, dressed me in the best clothes, and through their great kindness alone brought me up with so much love."

[1091] Abbreviation for Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra.

[105] drin-chen de-dag thams-cad 'dod-pa bde-ba 'dod kyang bde-ba'i-rgyu chos dge-ba-bcu sogs spyod-mi-shes-par sdug-bsngal-gyi-rgyu mi-dge-ba-bcu sogs kho-na dang-du-blangs-te zhe-'dod dang lag-len phyin-ci-log-tu-gyur-nas lam-log mgo-rmongs-su-gyur-pa / long-ba thang dkyil-du lus-pa lta-bu'i sems-can 'di-rnams snying-re-rje /

[106] bdag da-res dal-'byor-gyi mi-lus thob / mtshan-ldan-gyi-bla-ma mjal / yang-dag-pa'i-chos la spyod-du-yod-pa 'di skal-ba-bzang-bas[1092] le-lo dang phyi-bshol gyi dbang-du-mi-gtong-bar dam-pa'i-chos zab-mo 'di-lta-bu nyan-nas nyams-su-blang-ste ma-rgan-sems-can-thams-cad rigs-drug so-so'i las-snang sdug-bsngal bag-chags thams-cad dang-bral-nas rnam-mkhyen rdzogs-pa'i-sangs-rgyas kyi go-'phang thob-par-bya'o snyam-du sems-bskyed-pa ni gal-che-ba'i gnad dam-pa'o//

[107] gnyis-pa kun-spyod la'ang / spang-bya'i-kun-spyod dang / blang-bya'i-kun-spyod gnyis[1093] /

[108] dang-po spang-bya'i-kun-spyod la / snod-kyi-skyon-gsum / dri-ma-drug / mi-'dzin-pa-lnga dang bcas-pa las /

[109] snod-kyi-skyon-gsum ni / rna-ba-mi-gtad kha-sbub lta-bu'i skyon // yid-la-mi-'dzin zhabs-rdol lta-bu'i skyon / nyon-mongs dang 'dres dug-can lta-bu'i skyon / zhes-pa ltar /

[110] chos nyan-pa'i dus-su rang-gi rna-ba'i-shes-pa yul gzhan-du mi yengs-zhing chos-'chad-pa'i sgra de la gtad-nas mi-nyan-par kha-yengs-mig-yengs-byas-na snod kha-sbubs-pa'i steng-du bcud blugs-pa dang 'dra-bar lus chos-gral na yod kyang chos-tshig gcig-kyang rang-gis mi thos-pa'i skyon dang /

[111] gang ji-ltar thos-pa'i chos de yang go-lo dang thos-lor-bzhag nas yid-la-ma-bzung-na snod zhabs-rdol-du bcud ci-tsam[1094] blugs-kyang chags-rgyu-med-pa dang 'dra-bar chos ci-tsam nyan-yang rgyud-thog-tu bkal nas nyams-su-len mi shes-pa'i skyon dang/

1092 A, C: skal pa bzang bas

1093 B: gnyis las

1094 B: ji tsam

[105] "Every one of these beings, each of whom has been so kind to me, wishes to be happy, yet being unaware that the cause of happiness is the dharma, the conduct of the ten virtuous actions, and so on, pursues only the causes of suffering, the ten non-virtuous actions, and the like. Their deepest wishes and actions being in opposition, they have become disoriented and have strayed onto the wrong path like blind people lost in the middle of a desert. How pitiful!"

[106] "I have now attained a human body with freedoms and advantages. I have met a qualified master, and the genuine dharma does exist to be practiced. With such good fortune, I should not fall under the power of laziness and procrastination but should listen to and then practice this profound, sublime teaching (of the *Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra*). I will free every one of the motherly sentient beings from each of the individual karmic perceptions, sufferings, and habitual tendencies of the six realms and will attain the level of omniscient, perfect buddhahood." Generating bodhicitta by contemplating in that way is a sublime point of great importance.

Conduct

[107] Second, the conduct has two (parts): the conduct to be avoided and the conduct to be adopted.

The conduct to be avoided

[108] First, the conduct to be avoided has (three points): the three defects of a pot; the six stains; and the five ways of not retaining.

[109] Of these, the three defects of a pot are: (1) the defect of not listening (to the teachings) is like a pot turned upside-down; (2) the defect of not retaining (the teachings) in mind is like a pot with a hole in it; and (3) the defect of mixing (the teachings) with afflictions is like a pot containing poison.

[110] (1) When you listen to the teachings, you should not let your ear consciousness be distracted to other objects but should focus on the words of the dharma that is taught. If you do not listen (in this way) but are distracted by sights and conversation, it will be like pouring nectar onto a pot turned upside-down. Even though your body is sitting in an aisle (in the) teaching, you have the defect of hearing not even a single word of the teaching.

[111] (2) If you keep the teachings that you have heard on (the level of) superficial comprehension and superficial hearing, and you do not commit them to memory, it will be like a pot with a hole in it, in that no matter how much nectar is poured in, there is nothing to retain it. No matter how many teachings you hear, you have the defect of not being able to take them to heart and practice them.

[112] kun-slong che-'dod grags-'dod rnyed-bkur sogs 'dod-pa dang / chags-sdang-rmongs-gsum sogs dug-lnga'i rtog-pa dang 'dres-te nyan-na dug-can-gyi-snod du bcud bzang-po blugs-pa dang 'dra-bar chos kyis sems la mi phan-par ma-zad chos kyang chos-min du 'gro-ba'i skyon te

[113] gsum dang bral-bas nyon dgos-par / bcom-ldan-'das kyis yum-bar-mar / legs-par rab-tu-nyon la yid-la-zungs-shig dang / ngas bshad-par-bya'o zhes gdams-par-mdzad-do // de'i-phyir / chos chos-bzhin-du ma spyad-na chos kyis slar ngan-song du 'gro-ba'i rgyu-byed ces dam-pa rnams gsungs-so //

[114] dri-ma-drug ni / rnam-bshad-rigs-pa[1095] las /

> nga-rgyal dang ni ma-dad dang //
> don-du-gnyer-ba med nyid dang //
> phyi-rol rnam-g.yeng nang-du-sdud //
> skyo-bas nyan-pa dri-ma yin //

zhes-pa ste /

[115] bla-ma dang mched-grogs las nga lhag snyam-pa'i nga-rgyal dang / chos dang bla-ma mched-grogs la ma-dad-pa dang / chos la don-gnyer-gyi 'dun-pa[1096] med-pa dang / dbang-po yul-gyi phyir-'brang-zhing rtse-gcig-tu mi 'jog-pa dang / sems bying-rmugs kyis nang-du-sdud-pa dang / chos-thun ring-drags-pas bkres-skom tsha-grang sogs kyis gdung-nas[1097] nyan mi 'dod-pa skyo-bas nyan-pa rnams ni tshe 'dir yang / tshig-don phun-sum-tshogs-pa'i rang-bzhin bsam-gtan dang / shes-rab dang / rnam-par-grol-ba'i-chos la bar-du-gcod-cing phyir-mar-yang chos dang mi 'phrad-pa'i nyes-pas 'khor-ba mtha'-med-du 'khyams-par-'gyur-bas rab-tu-gus-pas spyod-lam-bsdam-zhing legs-pa'i-tshul-gyis nyan dgos-so //

[116] mi-'dzin-pa-lnga ni / tshig-'dzin la don mi 'dzin-pa dang / don-'dzin la tshig mi 'dzin-pa / brda-ma-'phrod-par 'dzin-pa / gong-'og nor-nas 'dzin-pa / don go-log-tu 'dzin-pa rnams spang dgos-pa yin-te /

1095 A, B, C: rnam shes rig pa

1096 A, C: don gnyer gyis 'dun pa

1097 B: gdungs nas

[112] (3) If you listen (to the teachings) motivated by desire, such as the desire for greatness, the desire for fame, the desire for riches and honor, and so forth, or (with a mind) mixed with the five poisonous concepts of attachment, aversion, ignorance, and so on, it will be like pouring excellent nectar into a vessel containing poison. Not only will the dharma no longer benefit your mind, but you will have the defect of the dharma becoming non-dharma.

[113] You must listen without these three (defects). The Bhagavān instructs in the *Medium-length Mother*,[1098] "Listen closely, in the proper manner, and retain it in your mind! I will explain it." For this reason the sublime beings said, "Unless you practice the dharma according to the dharma, the dharma itself becomes the cause for going to the lower realms."

[114] The six stains. As the *Vyākhyā-yukti* explains:

> Listening with (1) pride, (2) no faith,
> (3) Lack of endeavor,
> (4) Outward distraction, (5) inward withdrawal, and
> (6) Weariness; these are the six stains.

[115] Those who listen with (1) pride, thinking, "I am superior to my teacher and my dharma friends"; (2) no faith in the dharma, guru, or dharma friends; (3) lack of the earnest wish to endeavor in the dharma; (4) their senses going out toward objects so that they cannot focus one-pointedly; (5) the mind being inwardly withdrawn into drowsiness and dullness; and (6) weariness, since they do not want to listen (any longer) because the teaching session is too long and they are being distressed with hunger and thirst, heat and cold, and so forth—(those people) will, in this life, (experience) hindrances to the dharmas of concentration, knowledge, and complete liberation (in regard to) the perfect nature of the words and (their) meaning. And, also in their subsequent lives, they will not meet the dharma. As a consequence of these shortcomings, they will wander endlessly in saṃsāra. Therefore, with utmost respect, you should control your conduct and listen properly.

[116] The five ways of not retaining. One needs to abandon: (1) retaining the words but not retaining the meaning; (2) retaining the meaning but not retaining the words; (3) retaining while failing to understand; (4) retaining in confused sequence; and (5) retaining incorrectly.

1098 The *Medium-length Mother*, in Tibetan *yum bar ma* or *yum 'bring ba*, refers to the Prajñāpāramitā in twenty-five thousand verses.

[117] de lnga rim-par / tshig snyan cing legs-pa re-ched-du-'dzin-cing don-zab-mo la rtog-dpyod mi 'jug-na des sems la phan-mi-thogs[1099] / tshig gis ci-bya snyam-du khyad-du-bsad-nas don-zab-mo zhes spar-zin-byas-kyang tshig la ma bsten-par don mi 'byung / drang-nges ldem-dgongs-kyi-gsung[1100] sna-tshogs-pa brda'-ma-'phrod-par bzung-na yang-dag-pa'i-chos dang rgyab-'gal-du-'gro / gong-'og nor-nas bzung-na bstan-pa'i-babs dang mi mthun-pa la-sogs-pa'i 'gal-'du-can-du-'gyur / don log-par-bzung-na log-rtog rgyun-'byams-nas rang-rgyud chud-za-zhing bstan-pa'i rkang-'dren-du-'gyur-ba'i phyir spang dgos-pa yin-no //

[118] gnyis-pa blang-bya'i-kun-spyod la 'du-shes-bzhi brten-pa / pha-rol-tu-phyin-pa-drug[1101] dang ldan-pa / spyod-lam gzhan bstan-pa'o /

[119] dang-po 'du-shes-bzhi brten-pa ni // sdong-po-bkod-pa las /

> rigs-kyi-bu khyod-kyis bdag-nyid la nad-pa'i 'du-shes-bskyed-par-bya'o //
> chos la sman gyi 'du-shes-bskyed-par-bya'o //
> nan-tan nyams-su-len-pa la nad-nye-bar-'tsho-ba'i 'du-shes-bskyed-par-bya'o //
> dge-ba'i-bshes-gnyen la sman-pa mkhas-pa'i 'du-shes-bskyed-par-bya'o // zhes-so //

[120] chos nyan-pa'i rnal-'byor pha-rol-tu-phyin-pa-drug[1102] dang bcas-pa ni / chos-spyod-thams-cad-kyi-man-ngag-mngon-par-rtogs-pa'i-rgyud las //

[121]
> dang-po byang-chub-sems-bskyed de //
> rang-nyid sgrol-mar sgoms-byas-nas[1103] //
> rna-ba g.yas-par pad-ma bsam //
> slob-dpon 'jam-dpal bsgom-byas-nas //
> bla-ma'i zhal gyi 'od-zer dag //
> pad-mar nges-par thim-par-bya //
> 'gro rnams lha-mor bsgoms-byas-nas[1104] /
> thon-khar mi-rtog stong-pa-nyid //
> skad-cig-gnyis-tsam bsgom-par-bya //

zhes sbyor-dngos-rjes-kyi-rnal-'byor dang //

[1099] A, C: phan mi thog
[1100] B: gsungs
[1101] A, B, C: pha rol du phyin pa drug
[1102] A, B, C: pha rol du phyin pa drug
[1103] B: bsgom byas nas
[1104] B: bsgom byas nas

[117] Those five one by one (are as follows). (1) If you retain (what you have heard) out of fondness for pleasant and elegant phrases and do not engage in analysis of the profound meaning, it will be of no benefit to your mind. (2) When you are condescending toward (words), thinking, "What good are words?", then, even though you try to catch the so-called 'profound meaning', without relying on words the meaning will not come. (3) If you retain (what you have heard) but fail to understand the different (levels of) the teachings, such as the provisional meaning, the definitive meaning, and the covert intentions, you will run against the genuine dharma. (4) If you retain in a confused sequence, you will have the contrariness of not being in accord with the sequence of the teaching, and so forth. (5) If you retain incorrectly, then, perpetuating wrong concepts, you let your mind go to waste and you become a disgrace to the doctrine. Therefore, you need to abandon (these five ways).

The conduct to be adopted

[118] Second, the conduct to be adopted (has three parts): (1) relying on four concepts; (2) being endowed with the six transcendental perfections; and (3) exposing other (inappropriate) modes of conduct.

[119] First, relying on four concepts: From the *Gaṇḍha-vyūha-sūtra*:

> Noble son, you should give rise to the concept of yourself as a sick person.
> Give rise to the concept of the dharma as your medicine.
> Give rise to the concept of intensive practice as a fast cure for your illness.
> Give rise to the concept of your spiritual guide as a learned physician.

[120] (Second), the yoga of listening to the dharma while being endowed with the six transcendental perfections. From the *Chos spyod thams cad kyi man ngag mngon par rtogs pa'i rgyud*:[1105]

[121]
> First, develop bodhicitta.
> Then, meditate on yourself as Tārā
> And imagine your right ear to be a lotus.
> Meditate on your teacher as Mañjuśrī;
> Light rays (emanate) from your master's mouth and
> Actually dissolve into the lotus (of your ear).
> Meditate on all beings as female deities,
> And at the end (of the session) meditate a few moments
> On non-conceptual emptiness.

That is the yoga for the beginning, the main part, and the end.

[1105] The Tantra of Thorough Comprehension of the Instructions on all Dharma Practices.

[122] me-tog stan sogs rab-'bul zhing //
sa-phyogs spyod-lam sdoms-pa dang //
srog-chags kun la 'tshe-mi-byed //
bla-ma la ni gsol-ba-'debs //
ma-yengs bla-ma'i gdams-ngag nyan //
dogs-sel phyir-na skyon-tshig 'dri //
sgrol-ma-yan-lag-drug dang-ldan //

zhes-pas

[123] nyan-pa-pos chos-'chad-pa'i-stan dang / mchod-pa me-tog sogs 'bul-ba sbyin-pa / sa-phyogs dag-par-bya-ba dang / lus-ngag-yid-gsum gyi spyod-lam ma-dad-pa la-sogs-pa bsdams-pa ni tshul-khrims / chos-gral-du lhags-pa'i 'bu-sbrang sogs la mi 'tshe-zhing shig la-sogs-pa'i gnod-pa che-chung bzod-pa / chos-ston-pa la gsol-ba-'debs-shing nyan-par brtson-pa ni brtson-'grus / sems ma-yengs-par nyan-cing thos-pa[1106] 'dzin-pa ni bsam-gtan / rang-gis rtogs-pa'i don la dpyod-pa dang the-tshom-gyi-gzhir-gyur-na bla-ma la 'dri-zhing rtsod-pas rnam-par gtan-la-dbab-pa ni shes-rab ste pha-rol-tu-phyin-pa-drug[1107] rdzogs-par-ldan-pa dang /

[124] 'chad-pa-po la'ang chos bstan-pa ni sbyin-pa / nyon-mongs-pa-med-pa ni tshul-khrims / chos-ston-pa[1108] la skyo-ngal dang gnod-'tshe bzod-pas bzod-pa / spro-bas brtson-'grus / chos-'chad-pa las gzhan-du ma-yengs-pas bsam-gtan / tshig-don-'byed-pas shes-rab ste drug-po rdzogs-par-'gyur-ro //

[125] spyod-lam gzhan bstan-pa ni /

ma-dad-pa la chos mi bshad //
mi-na bzhin-du mgo-dkris dang /
gdugs dang 'khar-ba mtshon thogs[1109] dang /
mgo-bo g.yogs-pa dag la min //

zhes-pa la-sogs-pa'o //

[126] gsum-pa dpon-slob gnyis kyis 'chad-nyan ji-ltar bgyi-ba'i tshul la // chings-chen-po-lnga'am gsum gyis bcings-nas 'chad-de /

[1106] B: thos par
[1107] A, B, C: pha rol du phyin pa drug
[1108] B: chos bstan pa
[1109] A, C: thog

[122] (1) Present flowers, a throne, and the like;
(2) Clean the area and control your conduct;
(3) Do not harm any insect;
(4) Supplicate the master;
(5) Listen without distraction to the master's instructions; and
(6) In order to dispel your doubts, ask him about unclear words.
Thus, you are endowed with the six sections of Tārā.

[123] (To explain this in detail): (1) The person listening (to the teachings) should present a cushion, offerings, flowers, and so forth to the expounder of the dharma—this is generosity. (2) (He) should clean the area and refrain from any disrespectful conduct of body, speech, and mind—this is discipline. (3) (He) should not harm insects and bees that crawl between the rows of dharma (students) and should bear the greater and lesser discomforts of fleas and the like—this is patience. (4) (He) should supplicate the dharma teacher and be diligent in listening—this is diligence. (5) (He) should listen with a non-distracted mind and remember what is heard—this is meditation. And, (6) when analyzing the meaning of what he has understood, if doubts arise, (the listener) should inquire and discuss (doubts) with the teacher, thereby establishing conviction—this is knowledge. Thus (the listener) is endowed with the six perfections.

[124] As for the teacher: (1) Teaching the doctrine is generosity. (2) Being without afflictions is discipline. (3) Putting up with physical and mental fatigue[1110] and harm when teaching the dharma is patience. (4) (Teaching) with joy is diligence. (5) Being undistracted while expounding the dharma is meditation. And, (6) discerning the words and their meaning is knowledge. Thus, (the teacher) has the six (transcendental perfections) complete.

[125] (Third), exposing other (inappropriate) modes of conduct. As it is said:[1111]

> Do not explain the dharma to those who are disrespectful,
> Nor to those who, while not being sick, wrap their heads,
> Nor to those who carry parasols, staffs, or weapons,
> Nor to those who cover their heads.

How both teacher and student should explain and listen

[126] Third, how both teacher and student should explain and listen is demonstrated by five or three great key points.

1110 See *Illuminator*: sems skyo ba and lus ngal ba

1111 Stanza 88 of the fifth chapter of the *Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra*.

[127] dang-po chings-chen-po-lnga ni // rnam-bshad-rigs-pa[1112] las /

> mdo-don smra-bar-'dod-rnams la /
> man-ngag cung-zhig sbyin-par-bya //
> de la man-ngag 'di yin-te //
> dgos-pa bsdus-pa'i-don bcas dang //
> tshig-don bcas dang mtshams-sbyor bcas //
> brgal-lan[1113] bcas te bsnyad-par-bya //

zhes so /

[128] chings-gsum ni dkyus-kyi-sa-gcod-pa stag-mo'i mchongs-stabs lta-bu / tshig-gi-'bru-non-pa rus-sbal gyi nur-'gros lta-bu / skabs-kyi don-bsdu-ba seng-ge'i-'gying lta-bu'o //

[129] de-ltar chings-chen-po-lnga'am gsum-po rnams ni gzhung-gi skabs-dang-skabs-su ston-par-'gyur-ba de-dang-der shes-par-bya-ba las rgyas-par-ma-spros-la /

[130] don-du bdag-gi bla-ma bka'-drin-can ni / bstan-pa thams-cad 'gal-med-du rtogs-shing / gzhung-lugs thams-cad gdams-par-shar-bas gsar-rnying ris-med-pa'i bstan-pa'i-bdag-po nyid-du-gyur

[131] gshis gzhung 'di ji-ltar gsungs-na / sa-skya-pa-rnams[1114] la rje-btsun bsod-nams-rtse-mo'i 'grel-pa dang / dge-ldan-pa-rnams la dar-ṭīk dang / bka'-brgyud-pa-rnams la dpa'-bo-gtsug-phreng sogs kyi 'grel-pa[1115] bzhin gsungs-pa dang / rnying-ma-pa-rnams[1116] la sngar rdzogs-chen-shrī-sing-har[1117] rnying-ma-rang-lugs bzhin gsungs zhes thos-shing /

1112 A, C: rnam bshad rig pa

1113 A, C: brgal len

1114 A: sa skya ba rnams

1115 A: 'grel ba

1116 A, B: rnying ma ba rnams

1117 B: śrī sing ha la

[127] First, the five great key points. From the *Vyākhyā-yukti*:

> To those who wish to explain the meaning of the sūtras
> I must give a short instruction.
> The following (are the aspects of) the instruction to be explained:
> One must teach by relating (1) the purpose with (2) the condensed meaning;
> (3) The meaning of the words with (4) the outline;
> And also with (5) the responses to objections.

[128] The three key points are: (1) dividing the text into chronological sections, like the leaping of a tigress; (2) covering each syllable of the words, like the sliding walk of a turtle; and (3) occasionally condensing the meaning, like the graceful movement of a lion.

[129] The five great key points and the three key points will be taught in one place or another in the text. One should refer to them at their respective places, as I will not elaborate on them in detail.

[130] In fact, my kind teacher (Paltrül Rinpoche) had realized all teachings without any contradictions, and all texts appeared to him as instructions. Therefore, he became a lineage holder for the teachings of the Old and New (Schools).

[131] On this basis, when asked, "How should this text (the *Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra*) be explained?", I (Khenpo Kunpal) heard him say, "It should be explained to the followers of the Sakya School according to the commentary of the venerable Sönam Tsemo;[1118] to the followers of the Genden School[1119] with the commentary of Darma (Rinchen);[1120] to the followers of the Kagyü School with the commentary of Pawo Tsuglak Trengwa and others;[1121] and to the followers of the Old School—and (in particular) for the Śrī Siṃha (Shedra) of the ancient Dzogchen (monastery)—according to their own tradition of the Old School."[1122]

[1118] See *bsod nams rtse mo 'grel pa*, written by the great Sakyapa master Sonam Tsemo [bsod nams rtse mo] (1142-1182).

[1119] The Genden School [dge ldan pa] refers to the Gelukpa School [dge lugs pa].

[1120] See *dar ṭik*, written by Gyaltsab Dharma Rinchen [rgyal tshab dharma rin chen] (1362-1432).

[1121] See *gtsug lag 'grel chen*, written in 1565 by Pawo Tsuglak Trengwa [dpa' bo gtsug lag phreng ba] (1504-1566).

[1122] See *dpal sprul rnam thar*, folio 17a2-3: He explained (the *Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra*) to the followers of the Nyingma school according to the great commentary by Prajñākaramati and according to the commentary by Ngülchu Thogme [rnying ma'i nang sher 'byung blo gros kyi 'grel chen dang / thogs 'grel ltar bshad par mdzad la].

[132] phyis-su yul dus gang-zag gam dgos-dbang-gis dngul-chu-thogs-med kyi 'grel-pa[1123] gtsor-ston-gyis dgongs-pa sna-tshogs-par gsungs-pa dang / khyad-par rdo-rje'i-lung-gis-zin-pa'i mchog-gling rigs-sras-dam-pa sogs rang dpon-slob la zla-ba drug gi bar gzhung 'di gsungs skabs thogs-'grel gtsor-bzhag-gis gdams-ngag nyams-len la sbyar-ba gang-gsungs rang-blor nges-pa'i zin-bris sogs dkyus-bkod-kyi-tshul-du gtso-bor-byas-te /

[133] 'dir 'chad-par-bya-ba las lung-sbyor sogs rgyas-spros mkhas-pa la ni mi-dgos la yi-ges-'jigs-shing // las-dang-po-pa-dag 'bru-'grel tsam don-du-gnyer-zhing shes-par-sla-bas nyams-phan-zhig snying-la-bcang-ba las spros-pa la 'chel-bar-ma-byas-so //

[134] gnyis-pa bshad-bya-dngos-bshad-pa la / bstan-bcos kyi mtshan dang / mtshan de ldan gyi gzhung-bshad-pa gnyis las /

[135] dang-po la mtshan-dngos dang / zhar-byung 'gyur-phyag gnyis las /

> inserted root text: title
>
> rgya gar skad du / bodhi satva tsarya a-ba-ta-ra
> bod skad du / byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa

1123 A: 'grel ba

[132] Later, due to special circumstances of location, time, and audience, he taught many different interpretations but mainly the commentary of Ngülchu Thogme.[1124] In particular, he taught this text (the *Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra*) for six months to students such as myself (Khenpo Kunpal), to masters such as Chokgyur Lingpa, who is mentioned in the prophecies, to his sublime son, and others. At that time, mainly using the commentary of Ngülchu Thogme, he taught this text as an instruction for practice. I principally relied on my notes,[1125] which guaranteed that everything he (Paltrül Rinpoche) taught remained in my mind, along with other (sources) in a chronological manner.

[133] For what I will explain here, scholastic elaborations such as quotations will be unnecessary, and I am fearful of (using too many) words. I have in mind something practical, a mere word-by-word commentary for beginners, easy to practice and understand. Therefore, I will not pursue (detailed) elaborations.

The explanation of the main topic

[134] Second, the explanation of the main topic has two (primary parts): (1) the explanation of the title of the treatise and (2) the explanation of the text that bears this title.

The explanation of the title of the treatise

[135] The first (main part) has two (sections): (1) the actual title and (2) the adjunct homage of the translator.

The actual title

> inserted root text: title
>
> In the Indian language: *Bodhisatva-caryāvatāra*[1126]
> In the Tibetan language: byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-spyod-pa-la-'jug-pa (*Entering the Conduct of the Bodhisattvas*)

1124 See *dngul chu thogs med 'grel pa*, written by Ngülchu Thogme Zangpo [dngul chu thogs med bzang po] (1295-1369).

1125 See *dpal sprul zhal rgyun*.

1126 Note that Tibetans transcribe the Sanskrit 'bodhisattva' as 'bodhisatva'.

[136] dang-po la mtshan de rgya-skad ltar smros-na **rgya-gar** 'phags-pa'i-yul na skad-rigs chen-po mi-'dra-ba bzhi las legs-sbyar saṃskṛ-ta[1127] lha-yi-**skad-du** / **bo-dhi-satva-tsarya-a-ba-ta-ra** de-nyid **bod**-yul kyi **skad[1128]** bzang-shos go-bde nyid[1129] **du** sgyur-na / **byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-spyod-pa-la-'jug-pa** /

[137] rgya-bod-kyi-skad-gnyis shan-sbyar-na / bo-dhi zhes-pa byang-chub / de-bzhin-du satva sems-dpa' / tsarya spyod-pa a-ba-ta-ra 'jug-pa yin-no //

[138] mtshan de gang-gi-sgo-nas btags zhe-na spyir brjod-bya'i-don dang / rjod-byed-kyi-tshad dang / byed-las dang / yul dus gang zag dpe sogs kyi sgo-nas btags-pa las 'di ni dang-po'o//

[139] mtshan de'i don ni / ye-shes-drva-ba[1130] las /

> dri-ma-bral phyir byang-ba ste //
> yon-tan rgyas-pas chub-pa nyid //

ces gsungs-pa ltar /

[140] spang-bya sgrib-gnyis bag-chags dang bcas-pa dag-cing byang-bas-na byang / rtogs-bya'i-ye-shes yon-tan thams-cad khong-du-chub-pas-na chub /

[141] de-nyid 'thob-pa'i ched-du dbu dang yan-lag gzhan la gtong-ba sogs bya-dka'-ba'i-spyod-pas sems-mi-zhum-par dpa'-bas-na sems-dpa' ste / mdo-rgyan las[1131] /

> brtan-pa sdug-bsngal grogs-ngan dang /
> zab-mo thos-pas mi-g.yo-ba'o //

zhes-so //

[142] spyod-pa ni / rgyal-dbang klong-chen-pas /

> rgyal-sras rnams kyis kun la bslab-bya ste /
> gtso-bo pha-rol-phyin-pa-drug la bslab /

zhes gsungs-pa ltar /

byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-spyod-pa thams-cad pha-rol-tu-phyin-pa-drug[1132] tu 'du la /

[1127] C: saṃskṛtā
[1128] B: bod kyi yul skad
[1129] C: nyis
[1130] C: dra ba
[1131] B: mdo sde rgyan las
[1132] A, B, C: pha rol du phyin pa drug

[136] First, the title (of this text), when quoted in Indian languages, is ***Bodhisatva-caryāvatāra*** **in the** divine **language**, which is Sanskrit, 'the well-composed (language)' among the four great and special canonical languages (that existed) in the noble land **of India**. When translated **in** an easily understandable fashion into **the** best **language** of the country of **Tibet**, (the title) is ***Entering the Conduct of the Bodhisattvas***.

[137] Correlating the two languages of India and Tibet, 'bodhi' corresponds to 'awakening', 'satva' to 'hero', 'carya' to 'conduct', and 'avatāra' to 'entering'.

[138] If you ask how (this text) received its name, then (a text) generally is named in accordance with its topic, the size of the text, the function (of the text), a location, a time, a person, a metaphor, and so forth. Here, from among those, (the name of this text derives from) the first, (which is the topic).

[139] The (etymological) meaning of the title: (in regard to the word 'bodhi', meaning 'pure and inclusive') the *Ye shes drva ba* says:

> Because it is free from (all) stains, it is pure.
> Because (all) qualities are unfolded, it is inclusive.

[140] It is pure because that which is to be overcome, the two obscurations together with (all) habitual tendencies, is 'cleansed' and purified. It is 'inclusive' because it encompasses all qualities and wisdom that can be realized.

[141] In order to attain this (bodhi), the (bodhisattva) is courageous since his mind does not shy away from conduct that is difficult to do, such as sacrificing his head and limbs to others. Therefore, he is a 'satva', a 'hero'. From the *Sūtrālaṃkāra*:

> The stable one is unshaken by
> Suffering, negative-minded friends, or when hearing the profound.

[142] (In regard to the word) 'carya', the 'conduct', the lord of the victors, Longchenpa, said:

> The children of the victors should train in all (fields of knowledge),
> But they should principally train in the six transcendental perfections.

According to this statement, all of a bodhisattva's conduct is included within the six transcendental perfections.

[143] spyod-pa de la 'jug-pa ste / las-dang-po-pa'i blo-sbyong dang bstun-nas ji-ltar nyams-su-len-pa'i thabs sam tshul tshangs-la ma-nor-bar gzhung 'di-nyid-kyis yang-dag-par ston-pas-so //

[144] mtshan-btags-shing klad-du-smros-pa'i dgos-pa ni / spyir ming-btags-pa tsam gyi dgos-pa ni / ming-don gyi 'brel-ba shes-nas blang-dor-gyi-don la mi-rmongs-par-'gyur-te / lang-kar-gshegs-pa las /

> ming-du-gdags-par ma mdzad-na //
> 'jig-rten thams-cad rmongs-par-'gyur /
> de-bas mgon-po thabs-mkhas-pas //
> chos rnams ming-du-gdags-par-mdzad //

ces gsungs-so //

[145] khyad-par 'dir brjod-bya las btags-pas / dbang-po-rab-kyis mtshan tsam mthong-bas dbu-zhabs-kyi-don thams-cad khong-du-chud / 'bring-gis phyogs-tsam rtogs / tha-mas sman-snod la kha-byang-btags-pa ltar glegs-bam btsal sla-ba'i dgos-pa yod-do //

[146] mtshan rgya-skad sor-bzhag-du-smros-pas mtshan gnyis zlos-par-'gyur-ro zhe-na / der mi-'gyur-bar ma-zad dgos-pa'i-khyad-par-bzhi yod-de / gang zhe-na /

[147] rgya-gar chos-khungs[1133] btsun-pas bstan-bcos khungs-mar[1134] yid-ches-pa'i dgos-pa dang /

[148] dus-gsum-gyi-sangs-rgyas kun legs-sbyar lha'i-skad kyis chos gsungs-pas rang-gis de'i skad-du bton-cing bshad-pas rang-rgyud la byin-rlabs-'jug-pa dang /

[149] ma-'ongs-pa-na de'i skad kyis chos gsung-bar-'gyur-bas skad la bag-chags-'jog-pa dang /

[150] mtshan 'di ji-ltar-bar gzhung kun rgya-skad-du yod-na don shes-shing 'chad-par lta-ci tshig-tsam-yang ji-bzhin 'don-par-dka'-bar shes-nas lo-tsā-ba'i bka'-drin dran-pa'i dgos-pa'o //

[1133] A: chos khung

[1134] A: khung mar

[143] The (meaning of the word) 'avatāra', 'entering' into this conduct (is as follows): this text (the *Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra*) genuinely teaches, in a complete and unmistaken way, the manner and methods of practicing (the precious bodhicitta and the six transcendental perfections) in accordance with the mental capacity of a beginner.

[144] The purpose for giving a title and proclaiming it at the beginning (is both general and particular). The general purpose for giving a name: if one understands the connection between a name and its meaning, one will in no way be ignorant about what must be done and what must be avoided. From the *Laṇkāvatāra-sūtra*:

> Had (the Buddha) not given names,
> The whole world would have remained ignorant.
> Therefore, the Protector, skilled in means,
> Named (all of) his teachings.

[145] Particularly for this (text, the title) was given (according to) the topic. Therefore, when a person of highest capacity merely sees (the title of this text), he will understand the complete meaning from beginning to end. A person of average capacity will understand it in a general way, and a person of the lowest capacity will easily find the text, just like (finding) a medicine bottle to which a label has been attached. This is the purpose (for giving a title.)

[146] One might object, saying, "By quoting the untranslated title in the Indian language, one is thus repeating the title twice." Not only is this so, but (in fact) there are four special reasons for leaving the untranslated title. What are they?

[147] (1) Because India is the genuine source of the dharma, (giving the title in the Indian language) serves the purpose of inspiring trust in the origin of the treatise.

[148] (2) Because all the buddhas of the three times speak in Sanskrit, the divine language, (writing the title in the Indian language serves the purpose of) enabling the blessings (of the buddhas) to enter into one's mind-stream when one recites or explains (the title) in this language.

[149] (3) Because one will teach the dharma in the future in this language (once one has become a buddha), (giving the title in the Indian language serves the purpose of) establishing a habitual pattern in that language.

[150] (4) Because one understands how difficult it is to merely recite the words (of the Sanskrit title) correctly, not to mention (how difficult it would be) to understand the meaning (of the text) or explaining (it) if the entire text were in Indian language just like the title, (giving the title in the Indian language) serves the purpose of remembering the kindness of the translators.

> inserted root text: homage
>
> sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' thams cad la phyag 'tshal lo

[151] gnyis-pa 'gyur-phyag ni/ lo-tsā-bas bkod-pa ste 'di la rgyal-po'i-bkas-bcad-kyi-phyag gam / sde-snod-ngos-'dzin-gyi-phyag ces-bya-ste / chos-rgyal-yab-mes kyi ring-la lo-tsā-ba rang-rang-gi lhag-pa'i-lha la-sogs-pa rang-gang-mos la phyag-mdzad-pa las 'di-ltar gcig-tu-bkas-ma-bcad la /

[152] rgyal-po mnga'-bdag khri-ral gyis[1135] paṇḍi-ta dang lo-tsā-ba mang-po 'u-shang-rdo'i-lha-khang / 'phang-thang-ka-med-kyi-gtsug-lhag-khang du gdan-drangs-te chos rnams skad-gsar-bcad-kyis gtan-la-dbab-tshe sde-snod-gsum so-so-rang-rang dang mthun-pa'i 'gyur-phyag-mdzad dgos-par bkas-bcad-pa'i phyir ram sde-snod-gsum so-sor ma-'dres-par shes-par-'gyur-bas nas[1136] / de-skad ces-bya /

[153] de-yang 'dul-bar las rgyu-'bras phra-zhib gsungs-pa rnams sangs-rgyas nyag-gcig gi spyod-yul yin-pas thams-cad-mkhyen-pa la phyag-'tshal-lo zhes dang / mdo-sde rnams sangs-rgyas dang byang-sems-rnams dri-ba dang dri-lan gyi tshul-du gsungs-pas sangs-rgyas dang byang-chub-sems-dpa' thams-cad la phyag-'tshal-lo zhes dang / mngon-par phung-khams skye-mched kyi rab-dbye sogs gsungs-pa-rnams shes-rab zab-mos rtogs-bya yin-pa'i phyir 'phags-pa 'jam-dpal-gzhon-nur-gyur-pa la phyag-'tshal-lo zhes phyag-mdzad-pa las / 'dir mdo-sde dang mthun-par phyag-mdzad-pa ste /

[1135] B: mnga' bdag khri ral pa can gyis

[1136] B: so sor ma 'dres par 'gyur bas na

The adjunct homage of the translator

> inserted root text:
>
> **Homage to all buddhas and bodhisattvas!**

[151] Second, the homage of the translator: This (homage) is inserted by the translator. There are (different types of homages), such as the homage ordered by the king, which is also known as the homage that identifies the (specific) piṭaka[1137] (to which it belongs). During the time of the 'forefather dharma kings', the translators paid homage to any meditation deity to which they were personally devoted. (The kings) had not yet decreed that (the translators' homages) had to be uniform.

[152] King and ruler Tri Ralpachen invited many paṇḍitas and translators to the temple of Ushang Doyi Lhakhang and to the temple of Phang-Thang Kame. After they had finalized (all) the (translated) teachings (using) a revised language, (King Ralpachen) decreed that they must present a translator's homage (for each text), corresponding to the respective (piṭaka among) the three piṭakas, and that therefore the three piṭakas had to be translated so that they could be recognized as being distinct from one another. So (the king) decreed.

[153] Since the vinaya teachings on the most subtle laws of karma, cause and effect, are within the scope of the Buddha's knowledge alone, (each text of the vinaya-piṭaka) begins with 'Homage to the Omniscient One'. Since (the Buddha) taught the sūtra-piṭaka as questions and answers between the Buddha and the bodhisattvas, (each sūtra) begins with 'Homage to all buddhas and bodhisattvas'. Since the teachings of the abhidharma, such as the subtle distinctions between the (five) aggregates,[1138] the (eighteen) elements,[1139] the (twelve) sense fields,[1140] and so forth, can (only) be realized through profound wisdom, (each abhidharma text) begins with 'Homage to the noble Mañjuśrīkumārabhūta'. Here, (in the case of the *Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra*, the translator) presents his homage in accordance with the sūtra-piṭaka.

[1137] The three piṭakas or collections are: vinaya-piṭaka, sūtra-piṭaka, and abhidharma-piṭaka

[1138] skr. skandha

[1139] skr. dhātu

[1140] skr. āyatana

[154] ma-rig-pa'i gnyid-'thug-po las sangs-shing[1141] shes-bya'i-chos la blo-gros-kyi-pad-mo rnam-par-rgyas-pas-na **sangs-rgyas dang** / de-yang / ji-skad-du /

> ma-rig-gnyid las sangs phyir dang /
> shes-bya la yang blo-rgyas phyir //
> sangs-rgyas pad-mo 'dab ltar rgyas //
> de'i-phyir sangs-rgyas zhes-bya'o //

zhes-pa bzhin-no //

[155] bsam-pa byang-chub-mchog-tu-sems-bskyed-cing sbyor-ba phyin-drug gi nyams-len la brtson-pas **byang-chub** sgrub-pa la **sems** mi-zhum-par **dpa'**-ba dang /

[156] de gnyis kyi[1142] thugs-rgyud na bzhugs-pa'i dam-pa'i-chos dang bcas-pa **thams-cad la** lo-tsā-bas 'gyur-mdzad-pa'i snga-rol-du bar-chad-med-par 'gyur mthar-phyin-pa'i ched-du **phyag-'tshal-lo** zhes bkod-pa'o //

[157] gnyis-pa mtshan de ldan gyi gzhung bshad-pa la / bstan-bcos rtsom-pa la 'jug-pa'i yan-lag // brtsam-bya[1143] bstan-bcos lus-kyi-rang-bzhin / mjug yongs-su-rdzogs-pa'i bya-ba dang gsum /

[158] dang-po la mchod-par-brjod-pa / brtsom-par-dam-bca'-ba[1144] / khengs-pa-bskyung-ba / spro-ba-bskyed-pa dang bzhi las /

> inserted root text: stanza 1 / first half
>
> bde gshegs chos kyi sku mnga' sras bcas dang /
> phyag 'os kun la 'ang gus par phyag 'tshal te /

[159] dang-po ni / phyag-'tshal-te zhes gang-la 'tshal-na lam-bde-ba byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-theg-pa la brten-nas 'bras-bu-**bde**-ba rdzogs-pa'i-sangs-rgyas-kyi-sar **gshegs**-pas-na bde-gshegs zhes sangs-rgyas-dkon-mchog bstan-te /

[160] de'ang su-ga-ta'i sgra-las-drangs-na / su ni legs-pa mdzes-pa bde-ba dang / ga-ta gshegs-pa la 'jug-pas-na / legs-pa'am mdzes-par-gshegs-pa dang / slar-mi-ldog-par-gshegs-pa dang / rdzogs-pa'am ma-lus-par-gshegs-pa dang gsum ste /

1141 A, C: ma rig pa'i gnyid 'thug po lta bu sangs shing

1142 B: de nyid kyi

1143 A, C: brtsams bya

1144 B: rtsom par dam bca' ba

[154] **Buddha** ('awakened' and 'unfolded') means that he has 'awakened' from the deep sleep of ignorance and that he has completely 'unfolded' the lotus of wisdom toward (all) fields of knowledge. As it is said:

> Because he has 'awakened' from the sleep of ignorance,
> Because he has opened his mind to knowledge,
> Because Buddha is 'unfolded' like a lotus petal,
> Therefore, is he called the Buddha.

[155] **Bodhisattva** means a hero whose mind does not shy away from accomplishing enlightenment through developing supreme bodhicitta as the motivation and through endeavoring in the practice of the six transcendental perfections as the application.

[156] **To all** these, including the sublime teachings that dwell in the minds of both, (the buddhas and bodhisattvas), the translator, before beginning his translation, states, '**I pay homage**', in order to complete (the translation) without obstacles.

The explanation of the text that bears this title

[157] Second, the explanation of the text that bears this title has three (subsections): (1) the section of entering into the composition of the treatise, (2) the explanation of the body of the treatise itself which is to be composed, and (3) the conclusion, the sections which bring (the commentary) to a perfect ending.

The section of entering into the composition of the treatise

[158] The first (subsection) has four (parts): (1) declaration of respect, (2) pledging to compose (this text), (3) casting away pride, and (4) generating joy.

Declaration of respect

> inserted root text: stanza 1 / first half
>
> To the sugatas, who are endowed with the dharmakāya, together with their sons, and
> To all who are worthy of veneration, I respectfully pay homage. That done,

[159] First, to whom do you pay homage when (the text) says, '**I pay homage**'? (The text) presents the jewel of the Buddha (the first of the three jewels) by saying 'sugata' (the one gone to bliss) because, based on the vehicle of the bodhisattvas, the path of bliss, he has **gone to** the level of perfect buddhahood, the fruition of **bliss**.

[160] If one explains (the term) 'sugata' from the Sanskrit, then 'su' means 'excellent', 'beautiful', and 'blissful'; 'gata' means 'to embark upon a journey'. Therefore, 'sugata' has three meanings: (1) excellently or beautifully gone, (2) gone without returning, and (3) perfectly or completely gone.

[161] 'di'i don yang rgya-bod-kyi-mkhas-pa-rnams-kyis spangs-pa[1145] dang / rtogs-pa so-sor dang / gnyis-kar sbyar-te gsung-pa bzhin[1146] 'chad-du-yod- na'ang / 'dis 'thus-te //

[162] legs-pa'am mdzes-par-gshegs-pa ni / kun-nyon phyogs-kyi sdug-kun gyi nyes-pa'i dri-ma-med-par legs-pa'am mdzes-par-gshegs-pa / dper-na skyes-bu gzugs-mdzes-pa lta-bu / des ni 'khor-ba las khyad-par-du-byas-pa-ste / srid-pa-rnams ni sdug-bsngal rgyu-'bras las ma 'das-pa'i phyir-ro //

[163] slar-mi-ldog-par-gshegs-pa ni bdag-lta'i sa-bon drung-nas-phyung-ba'i phyir bud-shing bsreg-pas slar-mi-skye-ba bzhin-du 'khor-bar mi-ldog-pa-ste / dpe rims-nad legs-par-byang-ba'i skyes-bu lta-bu / des ni phyi-rol-pa'i lam[1147] las khyad-par-byas-pa-ste / de-dag srid-rtser song-na'ang srid-pa'i-rva-ba las 'da'-mi-nus-pa'o //

[164] ma-lus-pa'am rdzogs-par-gshegs-pa ni / spangs-rtogs mthar-phyin-pa'i yon-tan-gyi-mchog ma brnyes-pa cung-zad kyang med-pa dpe bum-pa legs-par-gang-ba lta-bu ste / gshegs-tshul des ni nyan-rang las khyad-par-phye-ste / de-dag las[1148] mi-ldog-par-tsam yod-kyang spangs-rtogs[1149] ma-rdzogs-pas nyi-tshe-ba yin-pas-so //

[165] sangs-rgyas bcom-ldan-'das rtogs-pa'am bstan-pa-chos-kyi-sku la mnga'-dbang-'byor-bas sam mnga'-bas-na **chos-kyi-sku-mnga'** zhes chos-dkon-mchog bstan-te / de'ang rgyud-bla-ma las /

> chos-sku-rnam-gnyis shes-bya-ste //
> chos-dbyings shin-tu dri-med-pa //
> de yi rgyu-mthun zab-pa dang //
> sna-tshogs tshul ni ston-pa'o //

zhes gsungs-pa ltar /

[166] stobs sogs rtogs-pa-chos-sku'i rgyu-mthun-pa bstan-pa-chos-sku zab-pa dang rgya-che-ba'i lung-gi-chos-phung ma-lus-pa sangs-rgyas la mnga'-bas-na de-skad-ces-so //

1145 A: spangs ba

1146 B: gsung ba bzhin du

1147 B: des phyi rol pa'i lam

1148 A, C: la

1149 A: spang rtogs

[161] The meaning of these (three interpretations of the term 'sugata') can also be explained according to the teachings of the Indian and Tibetan scholars as 'overcoming' as well as 'realization'. (Both of these terms can be applied to the three interpretations) individually as well as in combination. Hence:

[162] (1) 'Excellently or beautifully gone' means that (the Buddha) has gone excellently or beautifully, as he is untainted by the defects of (the truth of) suffering and (the truth of) its origination, (both of) which point at total affliction. The example for (the Buddha being untainted) is that of a person with a beautiful body. While (the Buddha) has gone beyond saṃsāra, worldly beings have not transcended suffering, its causes and their fruition.

[163] (2) 'Gone without returning' means that (the Buddha) has eradicated the seeds of the view of having an identity and consequently does not return to saṃsāra, just as firewood that has already been burnt will not again flare up. The example for this is a person who has recovered from smallpox (and so cannot be re-infected). While (the Buddha) has surpassed (all) the paths of the non-Buddhists,[1150] these (non-Buddhists), even if they reach the peak of worldly existence, can never transcend the confines of worldly existence.

[164] (3) 'Perfectly or completely gone' means that (the Buddha) has attained the supreme qualities of perfect overcoming and perfect realization without the slightest (degree of) anything remaining (to be attained). The example for this is a vase filled to the brim. He has surpassed the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas through his 'manner of having thus gone'. Though (śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas) will not fall back (into saṃsāra), they are only partially (realized) because they have not perfected (all the qualities) of overcoming and realization.

[165] Because the Bhagavān Buddha possesses or wields the power of the dharmakāya of realization and (the power) of the dharmakāya of the doctrine, (the text) says (the sugatas are) '**endowed with the dharmakāya**', thus presenting the jewel of the dharma (the second of the three jewels). From the *Uttara-tantra*:[1151]

> Understand that there are two kinds of dharmakāya:
> The utterly immaculate dharmadhātu,
> And that conducive to the cause of its (realization),
> Which manifests in profound and manifold ways.

[166] It is said so because the Buddha is endowed with the dharmakāya of the doctrine, all the mountains of teachings, the profound and extensive scriptures which accord with the dharmakāya of realization, such as the ten powers and others.

[1150] The 'non-Buddhists' or 'outsiders' [phyi rol pa; skr. bahirdhā] and the Buddhists or 'insiders' [nang pa; skr. ādhyāmika].

[1151] See *Buddha Nature*, pages 39, 169.

[167] sras-bcas sogs kyis dge-'dun-dkon-mchog bstan-te / de-yang spyir sku'i-sras sgra-gcan-'dzin / gsung-gi-sras nyan-thos dang rang-rgyal / thugs-kyi-sras byang-chub-sems-dpa' ste

[168] ji-ltar rgyal-po chen-po'i sras-kyi-thu-bo ni rgyal-po'i gdung-brgyud-'dzin-pa / 'khor-'bangs mnga'-ris skyong-ba / mdzod-kyi lde-mig 'dzin-pa ltar thugs-kyi-sras-mchog byang-sems rnams ni / rgyal-ba'i-gdung-'dzin-pa dang / dam-pa'i-chos kyi mdzod-'dzin-pa dang / 'khor gdul-bya'i-lhag-ma skyong-bas-na thugs-**sras** byang-sems theg-chen-dge-'dun ste / de-dang **bcas**-pa'i dkon-mchog-rin-po-che-rnam-pa-gsum **dang** /

[169] der-ma-zad nyan-thos dang rang-rgyal dang rang las bslab-pa rgan-pa grib-ma-sor-gcig-gis-mtho-ba sogs yon-tan sna-gcig-gis lhag-pa dang phan-'dogs-pa la-sogs-pas **phyag**-bya-ba'i-'**os**-su-gyur-pa gang-ci-yang-rung-ba ma-lus-pa **kun la'ang** tshul ji-lar 'tshal-na sgo-gsum **gus-par**-te gus-pa dang bcas-pa'i sgo-nas /

[170] sus 'tshal-na / slob-dpon zhi-ba-lhas skyes-bu-dam-pa ya-rabs-kyi-tshul dang mthun-par / dus-nam 'tshal-na / bstan-bcos 'di rtsom-pa'i sngon-du /

[171] dgos-ched bstan-bcos rtsom-pa la bar-chad-med-par rtsom-pa mthar-phyin-pa'i phyir dang / rjes-'jug-rnams kyang bstan-bcos yang-dag-par yid-ches-nas dad-cing don-gnyer-gyis 'dun-cing 'chad-nyan la bar-chad-med-par mthar-phyin-pa'i phyir **phyag-'tshal**-ba yin-**te** /

[172] 'phags-pa klu-sgrub kyis /

> bstan-bcos byed-pos ston-pa la //
> mchod-par-brjod-pa 'bras-med-min //
> ston-pa dang ni bstan-bcos la //
> dad-'dun-bskyed-par-bya phyir-ro[1152] //

zhes dang /

[173] rgya-cher-rol-pa las /

> bsod-nams rnam-smin bde-ste sdug-bsngal thams-cad sel //
> bsod-nams ldan-pa'i mi-yis bsam-pa rnams kyang 'grub //

ces gsungs-pas-so //

[1152] B: dad dang 'dun pa bskyed phyir ro

[167] By (saying) 'together with their sons', (the text) presents the jewel of the saṃgha (the third of the three jewels). Generally, the son of his body is Rāhula, the sons of his speech are the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, and the sons of his mind are the bodhisattvas.

[168] Just like the eldest son of a great king upholds the royal lineage, rules the entourage, the subjects, and people, and holds the key to the (storehouses of) treasure, just so the supreme sons of (the Buddha's) mind, the bodhisattvas, are the successors of the Victor, the holders of the dharma treasure. They (in turn) look after the retinue, the remaining ones yet to be tamed. Therefore, his mind **sons** are the bodhisattvas, the Mahāyāna saṃgha. **And together with** these, (Buddha and dharma), they constitute the three precious jewels.

[169] Furthermore, (I will pay homage) **to all who are worthy of veneration**, whoever they may be, not excluding a single one; to the śrāvakas and the pratyekabuddhas; to those who surpass myself by (even) a single quality, such as a senior (monk) who is as much as one finger-width of a shadow cast (in ordination time my) senior; and to those who are helpful and the like. How will I pay homage? (I will pay homage) **respectfully** with the three gates,[1153] that is to say in a respectful manner.

[170] Who is paying respectful homage? The master Śāntideva (pays homage) in accordance with the manner of the sublime beings of noble descent. When is he paying homage? Before composing this treatise.

[171] The reasons (for paying homage) are: (1) so that the composition of the treatise will be completed without any obstacles; (2) so that his followers will truly trust in the authenticity of the treatise, develop faith, and be inspired to diligence; and (3) so that (the treatise) will be successfully expounded and studied without any obstacles. Therefore, (the text says) '**I pay homage. That done …**'.

[172] Noble Nāgārjuna has said:

> The declaration of respect to the Teacher, (the Buddha),
> By the author of a treatise it is not without purpose,
> Because leads to the generation of faith and devotion
> In the teacher and treatise.

[173] From the *Lalita-vistara-sūtra*:

> The ripening of merit brings happiness and dispels suffering.
> A meritorious person will accomplish (all) wishes.

1153 The three gates [sgo gsum] are body, speech and mind.

[174] te zhes[1154] / de-ltar byas-te bstan-bcos rtsom zhes lhag-bcas so //

> insterted root text: stanza 1 / second half
>
> bde gshegs sras kyi sdom la 'jug pa ni /
> lung bzhin mdor bsdus nas ni brjod par bya /

[175] gnyis-pa ni // **bde**-bar-**gshegs**-pa sangs-rgyas kyi thugs-**sras** byang-chub-sems-dpa'-rnams **kyi** spyod-pa'am sdom-pa nyes-spyod-**sdom**-pa'i-tshul-khrims / dge-ba-chos-sdud-kyi-tshul-khrims / sems-can-don-byed-kyi-tshul-khrims sam bslab-pa **la 'jug-pa** ste sgrub-pa'i thabs sam tshul tshang-la ma-nor-ba ston-pa 'di **ni** pho-tshod dang rang-bzo ma-yin-par rgyal-ba'i-bka'-**lung** ji-lta-ba-**bzhin**-du **mdor bsdus**-shing go-sla-bar byas-**nas** 'dir **ni brjod-par-bya**-ste /

[176] de la lung-bzhin zhes-pa[1155] yid-ches-pa'i phyir-te / tshad-ma-rnam-'grel las /

> lung ni yid-ches tshig yin-te //
> nyes-pa zad-pa rdzun-gyi-tshig[1156] //
> smra-bar mi-'gyur rgyu-med phyir //
> nyes-zad lung-du shes-par-bya//

zhes-pas-so //

[177] de-lta-na rdzogs-pa'i-sangs-rgyas kyi thugs kyi dpal-be'u ru bskyil / mgul gyi bum-pa nas phyung / ljags kyi pad-ma ru bkram / dung gi tshems bar-nas phyar-te[1157] gsungs-pa'i rgyal-ba'i-bka' dri-ma-med-pa'i sde-snod-rin-po-che 'di-snyed ma-nyams-par yod-bzhin-du 'di-nyid brtsam-pas[1158] zlos-par-'gyur-ba las[1159] dgos-pa-med-do snyam-na /

1154 C: te zhes pa /

1155 B: de la lung bzhin zhes pa ni

1156 B: brdzun gyi tshig

1157 A: tshem par nas phyung te; B: tshems bar nas phyar ste

1158 B: brtsams pas

1159 B: zlos par 'gyur bas

[174] '**That done…**' is a continuative linker,[1160] indicating, "That done (meaning, having paid homage) in this way, I will compose the treatise."

Pledging to compose (the treatise)

> inserted root text: stanza 1 / second half
>
> In accordance with the scriptures, I will briefly explain
> Entering into the precepts of the sons of the sugatas.

[175] Second, in this (treatise) **I will briefly explain**, in a manner easy to comprehend, **in accordance with the** teachings and **scriptures** of the victors, without pretence or idiosyncratic fabrications, this complete and unmistaken presentation of the method or manner of practice, (which is) **entering into** the conduct or **the precepts** of the bodhisattvas, **the** heart **sons of the sugatas**, the buddhas. (The precepts) are the (three) trainings, which are (the three disciplines): (1) the discipline of refraining from negative conduct; (2) the discipline of practicing virtuous dharmas; and (3) the discipline of fulfilling the benefit of sentient beings.

[176] The reason for saying **in accordance with the scriptures** is so that one will trust (this treatise). From the *Pramāṇa-vārttika*:

> The scriptures are words one can trust.
> Since (the Buddha) is free from defects,
> He lacks the basis for speaking lies.
> Therefore, the scriptures should be understood to be (words) free of defects.

[177] One might think, "All the precious baskets of the immaculate teachings spoken by the Victor, which were retained in the endless knot within the heart of the perfect Buddha and which overflowed from the vase of his throat, and which he displayed on the lotus of his tongue, and which issued forth from between his conch shell teeth, still remain undiminished (in this world). Consequently, they need not be repeated again by composing this (treatise)."

[1160] This morpheme, called by Tony Duff 'continuative linker' or 'continuative connector', is called by Hahn 'semi-final-particle' [lhag bcas]. See *Illuminator*; *The Thirty Verses,* chapter on 'Structures of the Tibetan Language'; and *Schriftsprache*, pages 148-155.

[178] skyon de-dag med-de / rgyal-ba'i-bka' rgya-che / lung grangs-mang-bas snyigs-dus-kyi-sems-can tshe-thung-zhing / shes-brtson zhan-par ma-zad rmongs-shing le-los gzhan-dbang-du-gyur-pa-rnams-kyis[1161] de-snyed shes-dka'-zhing nyams-len-du-bsdu mi-shes-pa-rnams la brtse-ba-chen-pos dgongs-te / shes-sla-zhing nyams-len-du-bsdu bde-ba'i-ched-du[1162] 'thor-ba-rnams bsdus-te sgrub-pa-nyams-len-gyi-bstan-bcos byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-spyod-pa tshang-la ma-nor-ba 'di-nyid brtsam-par-bya'o zhes dam-bcas-pa'o //

[179] spyir bstan-bcos la / 'khrugs-pa-bsdeb-pa'i-bstan-bcos / gab-pa-'byin-pa'i-bstan-bcos / 'thor-ba-sdud-pa'i-bstan-bcos / sgrub-pa-nyams-len-gyi-bstan-bcos bzhi las / 'di-ni phyi-ma gnyis kyi dbang-du-mdzad-pa'o //

[180] de-ltar dam-pa-rnams ni gang dam-bcas-pa'i khur nam-du'ang mi 'dor-bas rtsom-pa mthar-phyin-pa'i dgos-pa yod-de /

[181] shes-rab-sdong-bu las /

> dam-pas man-po khas-'che-mi-byed-cing //
> gal-te dka' las khas-ni-blangs-gyur-na //
> rdo la ri-mo-bris-pa ji-bzhin-du //
> shi-yang gzhan-du-'gyur-ba ma-yin-no //

zhes gsungs-pa bzhin-no //

> inserted root text: stanza 2
>
> sngon chad ma byung ba yang 'dir brjod med /
> sdeb sbyor mkhas pa'ang bdag la yod min te /
> de phyir gzhan don bsam pa'ang bdag la med /
> rang gi yid la bsgom phyir ngas 'di brtsams /

[1161] C: gyur ba rnams kyis

[1162] B: nyams len du bsdu ba'i ched du

[178] Although free from these defects, the teachings of the Victor are vast, and the scriptures are numerous. The lifespan of beings in this degenerate age is, however, short. Not only is their intelligence and diligence feeble, but moreover, they have succumbed to the influence of foolishness and laziness. Hence, it is difficult for them to know all the (teachings and scriptures) which exist; nor do they understand how to essentialize them into practice. Considering (these beings) with great love, (Śāntideva) makes the pledge, "To provide an easily understandable and concise (manual) for practice, I will compose this complete and unmistaken 'conduct of the bodhisattvas'[1163]—this treatise for the practice of meditation—by gathering all the scattered fragments."

[179] In general, there are four kinds of treatises: (1) a treatise which rectifies sequential disorder; (2) a treatise which elucidates difficult points; (3) a treatise which gathers what has been dispersed; and (4) a treatise for the practice of meditation. The (Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra) falls under the latter two categories.

[180] Since sublime beings never discard the burden of their promise, whatever it may be, (Śāntideva's promise) is the reason that this composition (of the *Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra*) was completed.

[181] From the *Prajñā-daṇḍa*:

> Sublime beings do not make many promises.
> But once they have accepted a difficult (task),
> It is as though written in stone;
> Even in (the face of) death, they will not waver.

Casting away pride

> inserted root text: stanza 2
>
> I can say nothing here that has not already been said before,
> And I possess no skill in prosody.
> Hence, I would not even imagine that this might benefit others;
> I wrote it only to cultivate (bodhicitta) within my own mind.

1163 This refers to the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra.

[182] gsum-pa ni / **sngon-chad** sangs-rgyas bcom-ldan-'das dang klu-thogs sogs-kyis ma-gsung-ba'am[1164] **ma-byung-ba** yi don-zab-mo gzhan-**yang** gzhung '**dir brjod**-rgyu-**med** la / de-lta-na'ang tshig sdeb-sbyor yang / bi-bhu-ti-tsan-dras /

> sangs-rgyas bstan la bdag-nyid-che //
> skyes-bu mang-du byon-gyur-kyang //
> zhi-ba-lha dang 'dra-ba-yi //
> nyams dang dgongs-pa can mi-rnyed //

ces gang-gsungs-pa don-la-gnas-pa yin-na'ang khengs-pa-bskyungs-te /

[183] slob-dpon dpa'-bo'i skyes-rabs-so bzhi-pa dang / rgyal-po dge-ba'i-dbang-po'i skyes-rabs-dpag-bsam-'khri-shing sogs don rgyal-ba'i-skyes-rabs mdo-sder-gsungs-pa de-nyid yin-kyang tshig sdeb-sbyor dang snyan-ngag gis bcings-pas mkhas-pa mgu-ba-bskyed-pa'i bstan-bcos yin-pa lta-bu'i **sdeb-sbyor** gzhan las mchog-tu-gyur-pa'i **mkhas-pa'ang** zhi-ba-lha **bdag la yod**-pa **min-te** /

[184] rgyu-mtshan **de**-dag-gi **phyir**-na spyod-'jug 'di-nyid rtsom-pas **gzhan-don** rgya-chen-po-zhig 'ong-ngo snyam-pa'i **bsam-pa'ang bdag la med** ces[1165] tshig dang don la mkhas-pa'i nga-rgyal spangs-pa'o //

[185] 'o-na 'di-nyid brtsom-pa[1166] la dgos-pa ci-yod snyam-na / **rang-gi yid la** bsam-pa[1167] byang-chub-kyi-sems dang sbyor-ba pha-rol-tu-phyin-pa-drug ste / byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-spyod-pa **bsgom** zhing goms-cha-lon-pa la 'chad-rtsod-rtsom-gsum las rtsom-pa mchog-tu-'gyur-ba'i **phyir ngas** gzhung '**di**-nyid **brtsams**-pa yin-te / slob-dpon tsan-dra-go-mis /

> gang phyir mkhas-pa'i-las-gsum las //
> 'chad-rtsod-gnyis la ma-nges-pa //
> srid phyir mi-'khrul rtsom-pa-ste //

zhes gsungs-pas-so //

[186] 'di'i dgos-pa yang / nga-rgyal-gyi-sgang-bu la yon-tan gyi chu mi chags zhes sems nga-rgyal gyis khengs-na lung dang rtogs-pa'i dam-pa'i yon-tan gyi chu mi-'dzin-par ma-zad bdud kyis bslu-bar-'gyur-zhing brtsom-pa'i-bstan-bcos[1168] kyang gzhan-don-du'ang mi-'gyur-ba'i skyon rnams spongs-ba'i ched-du yin-no //

[1164] B: ma gsungs pa'am

[1165] B: bdag med ces

[1166] B: brtsam pa

[1167] B: bsams pa

[1168] B: rtsom pa'i bstan bcos

[182] Third, **I can say nothing here**, in this text, (teach) no profound meaning **that has not already been said** or taught **before** by the Bhagavān Buddha, Nāgārjuna, Asaṅga, and others. By saying this, (Śāntideva) casts away pride in regard to his words and prosody. Still, Vibhūticandra's comment remains true:

> In the (history of) the Victor's doctrine,
> Many great beings and persons have appeared,
> But I have found none
> Whose experience and realization compare with Śāntideva's.

[183] **I**, Śāntideva, **possess no skill** that surpasses others in prosody, (such as one finds) in treatises that delight scholars because their words are woven together **in prosody** and poetry. This is the case with the *Jātakamālā in 34 Sections* by (the Indian) master Śūra,[1169] as well as the previous life stories (of the Buddha) called *Kalpalatā* (written) by (the Indian poet) King Kṣemendra, and other meaningful (writings) concerning the previous life stories of the Victor which are taught in the sūtra-piṭaka.[1170]

[184] **Hence**, for these reasons, "**I would not even imagine that** composing **this** *Caryāvatāra*[1171] **might** greatly **benefit others**." Thus, he casts away the pride of being skilled in words and meaning.

[185] If one thinks, "But what, then, is the purpose of composing this (treatise)?" "(It is) in order **to** grow accustomed to and to **cultivate within my mind** the conduct of the bodhisattvas, which is the motivation of bodhicitta and the application of the six transcendental perfections. Moreover, because composing (a treatise) is supreme among the three of teaching, debating, and composing, **I wrote it**, (meaning) this text. As master Candragomin said:

> Therefore, among the three activities of scholars,
> Teaching and debating may be uncertain (in nature),
> However, there can be no delusion (permitted) in (regard to) composition.

[186] (What is) the reason for this (casting away of pride)? As it is said, "The water of qualities will not stay upon the ball of arrogance." When the mind is filled with arrogance it cannot hold the water of the sublime qualities of the (teachings of) scriptures and realization. Furthermore, one has become deluded by Māra (the evil one), and the treatises that one composes will not benefit others. Therefore, one should avoid these mistakes.

1169 For biographical notes on Ācārya Śūra [slob dpon dpa' bo] see *mkhas btsun bzang po Vol. I*, pages 473-485.

1170 See the Jātaka section [skyes rabs] in Peking Tangyur Vol. 128-128.

1171 Abbreviation for Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra.

> inserted root text: stanza 3
>
> dge ba bsgom phyir bdag gi dad pa'i shugs /
> 'di dag gis kyang re zhig 'phel 'gyur la /
> bdag dang skal ba mnyam pa gzhan gyis kyang /
> ci ste 'di dag mthong na don yod 'gyur /

[187] bzhi-pa / de-ltar-na rang-gis shes-pas chog-mod / 'di-nyid rtsom-pa la dgos-pa ci-yod zhe-na /

[188] **dge-ba** byang-chub-kyi-sems dang spyod-pa pha-rol-tu-phyin-pa-drug[1172] nyid **bsgom**-pa'am goms-par-bya-ba'i **phyir** ram ched-du **bdag-gi** byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-spyod-pa la dang-'dod-yid-ches-kyi-**dad-pa'i shugs**[1173] sam rgyun spyod-'jug rtsom-pa '**di-dag-gis-kyang** dus-**re-zhig** gong-'**phel**-du-'**gyur la** /

[189] yang-yang 'dris-shing bsgom-na gtan-du gong-'phel-du ches-cher-'gyur-ro zhes[1174] rang spro-ba-bskyed-pa dang /

[190] dman-sa-bzung-ste **bdag dang skal-ba mnyam-pa** ste rigs-'dra-ba byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-spyod-pa don-du-gnyer-zhing gzu-bor-gnas-pa **gzhan-gyis-kyang ci-ste** spyod-'jug '**di-dag mthong-na** byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-spyod-pa la dga'-zhing spro-bas 'jug-pa la-sogs-pa'i **don yod**-par '**gyur** srid ces gzhan spro-ba-bskyed-pa'o //

[191] de'i dgos-pa yang / rang ha-cang sems zhum-pas sgyid-lugs-na'ang yon-tan skye-ba'i[1175] snod-du-mi-rung-bas sems spro-ba-bskyed-de gzengs-bstod-pa'o //

[192] de-yang sems ha-cang nga-rgyal-gyis mtho-ba dang zhum-pas dma'-ba gnyis yon-tan khyad-par-can rang-rgyud la skye-ba'i gegs-su-'gyur-bar / yab-sras-mjal-ba'i-mdo las / bcom-ldan-'das-kyis yab rgyal-po zas-gtsang-ma bden-pa-la-bkod-tshul gyi lo-rgyus bzhin-no //

[193] de-ltar rgyu-bzhi-po 'di-ni rtsom-pa[1176] tsam-du ma-zad 'chad-nyan sgom-pa[1177] sogs gang-dang-gang-la de-dang-der bar-chad mi 'byung-ba dang / mthar-phyin-pa dang / sems nga-rgyal gyis khengs-pa-spangs-ba[1178] dang / le-los sems zhum-pa spang dgos-pas 'di bzhi dang ldan-na bya-ba gang rtsom-pa thams-cad legs-par-'grub-ste / skye-bo ya-rabs kyi chos-lugs yin-pa'i phyir-ro //

[1172] A: pha rol du phyin pa drug

[1173] B: dag 'dod yid ches kyi dad pa'i shugs

[1174] B: gtan du ches cher 'gyur ro zhes

[1175] A: skye pa'i

[1176] B: 'di rtsom pa

[1177] B: bsgom pa

[1178] C: spangs pa

Generating joy

> inserted root text: stanza 3
>
> Through these (compositions) may the power of my faith
> Increase for awhile so that I may cultivate virtue.
> Still, if by chance others equal in fortune to myself view these,
> Some benefit might ensue.

[187] Fourth, one might ask, "Since you, (Śāntideva), are content just to know this for yourself, what is your reason for composing this (text)?"

[188] **Through these** compositions of the *Caryāvatāra* **may the power** or flow **of my faith** of amazement, inspiration, and conviction in **my** bodhisattva conduct **increase** more and more **for a while so that I,** or, in order that I, **may** become acquainted with or **cultivate virtue**, namely, bodhicitta and the conduct of the six transcendental perfections.

[189] (Śāntideva) generates joy within himself by proclaiming, "As I become consistently familiar with and accustomed to (bodhicitta), it will increase everlastingly more and more."

[190] (Śāntideva) adopts a posture of humility by saying, "**Still, if by chance others**, similar types, **equal in fortune to myself**, who live (their lives) ardent for and straightforward in the conduct of the bodhisattvas, **view these** (compositions of) the *Caryāvatāra*, it is possible that **some benefit might ensue**, because (such persons) may enter with happiness and joy into the conduct of a bodhisattva."

[191] The reason for this (is as follows): If one feels downtrodden due to an overly timid mind, one is not an appropriate vessel for giving rise to qualities. Therefore, one should be uplifted through generating a joyous state of mind.

[192] If one's mind is either overly elated due to pride or overly depressed in the face of timidity, (this condition) can cause obstacles to the development of special qualities within one's mind-stream, as is (illustrated) in the story from the *Pitāputra-samāgamana-sūtra* (that recounts) how the Bhagavān established his father, King Śuddhodana, in the truth (of the dharma)."

[193] Thus, these four prerequisites (of declaring respect, pledging to compose, casting away pride, and generating joy) are needed not only for a composition such as this, but they are also required for anything one may undertake, be it teaching, studying, meditating, and so forth. The reason for this is that (1) (by declaring respect) obstacles will not arise for this or that (undertaking); (2) (by pledging to endeavor in such a task) it will be completed; (3) (by casting away pride) one will overcome the haughtiness of an arrogant mind; and (4) (by generating joy) one will overcome reluctance caused by laziness. Therefore, if one is endowed with these four (prerequisites), whatever work one undertakes will be completed in an excellent manner. For this reason it is (known as) the approach of a noble person.

[194] de bzhi'i shugs-kyis dgos-sogs-chos-bzhi yang bstan-te /

brjod-bya ni bde-gshegs-sras kyi sdom-la-'jug-pa ni zhes-pas dang /

dgos-pa ni / lung-bzhin mdor-bsdus sogs kyis mthong-ba-don-yod-par-'gyur // zhes-pas dang /

nying-dgos ni bde-gshegs chos-kyi-sku-mnga' ba sras-bcas byang-chub-sems-dpa'i[1179] tshogs-kyis-bskor-ba de thob-bya'i-'bras-bu bla-na-med-pa'o //

'brel-ba ni phyi-ma-rnams snga-ma-rnams med-na mi 'byung-ba'o //

[195] de-dag-gi dgos-pa yang gzhan-dag yid-ches-pa'am don-'gyur-gyi-the-tshom gyis 'jug-pa'am / gzhan gyi log-rtog-bzlog-pa'am / gzhung mdzes-par-byed-pa'i ched yin zhes slob-dpon-rnams bzhed-tshul gyi khyad-par-ro //

[196] gnyis-pa rtsom-bya[1180] bstan-bcos-lus-kyi-rang-bzhin bshad-pa la rgya-gzhung-du sdom-du-bkod-pa /

> byang-chub-sems-mchog rin-po-che //
> ma-skyes-pa-rnams skye-gyur-cig //
> skyes-pa nyams-pa-med-pa yang //
> gong-nas-gong-du-'phel-bar shog //

ces gsungs-pa-ltar /

[197] byang-chub-kyi-sems rin-po-che ma-skyes-pa bskyed-par-byed-pa'i le'u gsum /

skyes-pa mi-nyams-par-byed-pa'i le'u gsum /

mi-nyams-par gong-du-spel-bar-byed-pa'i[1181] le'u gsum /

de-ltar spel-ba'i 'bras-bu gzhan-don-du bsngo-ba'i le'u gcig ste

le'u bcu sa-bcad bzhi'i[1182] khongs-su-bsdus-te 'chad-par-byed-pa la /

1179 A, C: chos kyi sku mnga' ba sras byang chub sems dpa'i

1180 B: brtsam bya

1181 B: mi nyams par gong nas gong du spel bar byed pa'i

1182 B: le'u gcig ste sa-bcad bzhi'i

[194] Through the power of these four (prerequisites), the four aspects such as 'the purpose and so forth' are also demonstrated:

(1) The topic (of the text is indicated) by saying (in stanza 1, line three of the Tibetan text): "Entering into the precepts of the sons of the sugatas."

(2) The purpose, making it meaningful to read (the text, is indicated) by saying (in stanza 1, line four of the Tibetan text): "In accordance with the scriptures, I will briefly…"

(3) The ultimate purpose, the unexcelled fruition that can be achieved, (is indicated in stanza 1, line one of the Tibetan text) by saying: "To the sugatas, who are endowed with the dharmakāya, together with their sons…", which means that (the sugatas) are surrounded by hosts of bodhisattvas.

(4) The relation (between these is): The latter (aspects) cannot exist without the former (aspects).

[195] Again, the purpose for these (four aspects mentioned above) is to make people approach (the treatise) with trust and an inquisitiveness which searches for meaning; to prevent people from forming wrong ideas; and to beautify the text. Thus, the masters possess various special styles of explanation.

The explanation of the body of the treatise itself, which is to be composed

[196] Second, the explanation of the body of the treatise which is to be composed is summarized in an Indian text:

> May the precious and supreme bodhicitta
> Arise in those in whom it has not yet arisen;
> And where it has arisen may it not decrease
> But ever increase more and more.

[197] Thus, the ten chapters are explained by categorizing them into four sections:

(1) Three chapters that give rise to the precious bodhicitta in those in whom it has not yet arisen (chap. 1, 2, 3).

(2) Three chapters that prevent the decrease (of the precious bodhicitta) where it has arisen (chap. 4, 5, 6).

(3) Three chapters that not only prevent the decrease (of the precious bodhicitta) but cause it to increase more and more (chap. 7, 8, 9).

(4) A single chapter concerning the dedication of the results that have thus been developed for the benefit of others (chap. 10).

[198] dang-po byang-chub-kyi-sems rin-po-che ma-skyes-pa bskyed-par-byed-pa'i le'u gsum las / dang-po brod-pa-bskyed-pa phan-yon gyi le'u la / gzhung dang mtshan no //

[199] dang-po la byang-chub-sems-kyi-rten dang / brten-pa sems-bskyed kyi phan-yon bshad-pa gnyis las /

[200] dang-po la lus-rten bshad-pa dang / sems-rten bshad-pa gnyis las /

> inserted root text: stanza 4
>
> dal 'byor 'di ni rnyed par shin du dka' /
> skyes bu'i don sgrub thob par gyur pa la /
> gal te 'di la phan pa ma bsgrubs na /
> phyis 'di yang dag 'byor par ga la 'gyur /

[201] dang-po ni / de-la-dir lus-rten phun-tshogs kyi dbang-du-mdzad-de[1183] bral-ngos-nas dal-ba dang / ldan-ngos-nas 'byor-ba ste / klu-sgrub kyis /

dmyal-ba yi-dvags dud-'gro dang //
tshe-ring-lha dang kla-klo dang /
log-lta sangs-rgyas kyis stong dang //
lkugs-pa 'di-dag mi-khom-brgyad[1184] //

ces-pas

[1183] B: dbang du mdzad nas
[1184] C: mi khoms brgyad

The three chapters that give rise to the precious bodhicitta in those in whom it has not yet arisen

The chapter on the benefits that generate joy

[198] To begin with, from among the three chapters that give rise to the precious bodhicitta in those in whom it has not yet arisen, first (comes) the chapter on the benefits that generate joy, which has two (sections): (1) the text (of the chapter) and (2) (listing) the name (of the chapter).

The text of the chapter

[199] The first has two (subdivisions): (1) explaining the supporting basis (necessary) for (developing) bodhicitta, and (2) explaining the benefits of generating bodhicitta, that which is supported (by the physical and mental basis).

Explaining the supporting basis (necessary) for (developing) bodhicitta

[200] The first has two (parts): (1) explaining the physical basis (necessary for developing bodhicitta), and (2) explaining the mental basis (necessary for developing bodhicitta).

Explaining the physical basis (necessary for developing bodhicitta)

> inserted root text: stanza 4
>
> These freedoms and advantages are extremely difficult to obtain.
> Since I have gained (the opportunity) to accomplish that which is meaningful for a person,
> If I do not practice what is beneficial in this (lifetime),
> How will a perfect opportunity like this come about later?

[201] First, if one considers the perfect physical basis in terms of what it is free from, (then, since it is free from the eight unfortunate conditions, it is endowed with the eight) freedoms; and, in terms of what it possesses, (it possesses the ten) advantages. Nāgārjuna said:

> (1) Being born in a hell realm, (2) as a hungry ghost,
> (3) As an animal, (4) as a long-living god, or (5) as a barbarian,
> (6) Having wrong views, (7) being born (at a time) when there is no buddha,
> Or (8) being born as a retarded person; these are the eight states without freedom.

[202] mi-khom-pa-brgyad[1185] dang bral-bas dal-ba-brgyad dang /

mi-nyid dbus-skyes dbang-po-tshang /
las-mtha'-ma-log gnas-la-dad /

ces rang-'byor-lnga dang /

sangs-rgyas-byon dang des chos-gsungs //
bstan-pa gnas dang de'i rjes-'jug /
gzhan phyir snying ni brtse-ba'o //

zhes gzhan-'byor-lnga ste /

[203] **dal-'byor**-bco-brgyad tshang-ba'i mi-lus-rin-po-che '**di-ni** rgyu dpe grangs gang la bsam-na **rnyed-par shin-tu dka'**-ba yin-te /

[204] rgyu tshul-khrims rnam-par-dag-pas gzhi-bzung / sbyin-pa la-sogs-pa drug-gis grogs-byas[1186] / smon-lam rnam-par-dag-pas mtshams-sbyar-ba zhig dgos-pa la bsam-na dang /

[205] dpe yang rgya-mtsho chen-po'i gting-du gnas-pa'i rus-sbal long-ba lo brgya-re'i mtshams-su mtsho steng-du lan-re 'ong-ba'i mgrin-pa gnya'-shing-gi bu-ga dang 'phrad-pa las kyang rnyed-dka'-ba[1187] la bsam-na dang /

[206] grangs yang dmyal-ba na[1188] sa-chen-po'i rdul lta-bu dang / yi-dvags na[1189] chu-bo gang-gā'i[1190] bye-ma snyed lta-bu dang / dud-'gro na[1191] chang-'gag-gi sbang-ma lta-bu / lha-ma-yin la kha-ba-bu-yug 'tshub-pa lta-bu / lha-mi la sen-mo'i steng gi rdul lta-bu dang /

[207] yang nyin-mtshan-gyi skar-ma'i dpes grangs mang-nyung la bsam-na rnyed-par-shin-tu-dka'-ba

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1185 A, C: mi khoms pa brgyad
1186 B: sbyin pa la sogs pas grogs byas
1187 B: rnyed par dka' ba
1188 A, C: dmyal ba ni
1189 A, C: yi dvags ni
1190 A, C: gang ga'i
1191 A, C: dud 'gro ni

[202] Consequently, the eight freedoms are to be free from these eight unfortunate conditions which lack freedom.

The five individual advantages (according to Nāgārjuna) are:

> (1) To be born as a human being, (2) in a central land, (3) with all one's sense faculties intact,
> (4) Not in an extreme karmic predicament, and (5) with faith in the dharma.

The five circumstantial advantages (according to Nāgārjuna) are:

> (1) A buddha has appeared and (2) has taught the dharma;
> (3) His teachings still exist and (4) are practiced;
> And (5) there are those who are kind-hearted toward others.

[203] (Concerning) **this** precious human body endowed with the eighteen **freedoms and advantages,** "If I reflect upon it in any way whatever, (such as) upon its causes, upon its example, or upon its numerical comparisons, it **is** (understood to be) **extremely difficult to obtain**."

[204] "If I reflect on (the unlikeliness of gaining a precious human body, considering) its causes, (I understand that it is) necessary to establish its basis through an utterly pure discipline, to support it by the (practices of the) six (transcendental perfections such as) generosity and so forth, and to embrace it with pure aspirations."

[205] "If I reflect on (the unlikeliness of gaining a precious human body, considering) it through an example, it is as difficult to gain as it is for a blind turtle, who lives in the depths of the great ocean and rises to the ocean's surface only once every hundred years, to (accidentally) stick its neck through a yoke (floating on the surface)."

[206] "(If I reflect on the unlikeliness of gaining a precious human body, considering) it through numerical comparisons, there are as many beings in the hell (realms) as there are specks of dust in the whole world; as many in the preta (realm) as (grains of) sand in the river Ganges; as many in the animal realm as ferment particles in a beer barrel; and as many in the asura (realm) as snowflakes swirling in a blizzard. On the other hand, gods and humans are as few as the particles of dust that can be heaped on a fingernail."

[207] "Moreover, if I reflect on (the unlikeliness of gaining a precious human body, considering) the amount and quantity (of beings) through the example of stars at day time and stars at night-time, (I understand that) this (precious human body) is extremely difficult to gain."

[208] 'di da-res bla-ma-dkon-mchog gi thugs-rje dang rang-gi las-dbang bzang-po zhig-gis **skyes-bu'i** ste / skyes-bu-gsum kyi **don** mngon-mtho dang nges-legs gang **sgrub**-na 'grub-par-nus-pa'i dal-'byor 'di rnyed-pa'am **thob-par-gyur-pa la** / **gal-te** lus-rten '**di la** rang-gzhan la **phan-pa** dam-pa'i-chos[1192] zhig **ma-bsgrubs**-par yengs-ma-lam-du mi-tshe-stong-zad dang dal-'byor don-med-du-byas-te bsdad-**na** / nam-'chi-cha-med / 'chi-rkyen nges-pa-med-pas dus do-nub tsam-du'ang mi-'chi-ba'i nges-pa-med-pas shi-bar-gyur-na phyin-chad dam **phyis**-su ni mi-lus '**di**-'dra-ba **yang-dag**-par '**byor-par ga-la-'gyur**-te / 'thob-par-mi-'gyur-bas dal-'byor don-med chud-zos-su-ma-byed-cig ces gdams-te /

[209] des-na da-res dal-'byor-gyi mi-lus thob / mtshan-ldan-gyi bla-ma dang mjal // zab-mo'i gdams-pa thob-pa'i dus-'dir rnyed-par-dka'-zhing 'jig-sla-ba rnyed-na don-che-ba'i-tshul la yang-yang bsam-ste[1193]

[210] 'jig-rten-gyi-bya-ba thams-cad che-bzhag-chung-bskyur-gyis rang-mgo-nyi-ma-chos-kyis-bton-te myur-ba-nyid-du dal-'byor la snying-po-lon-par-bya dgos-te / dpal mar-me-mdzad kyi zhal-nas /

> tshe ni yun-thung shes-bya'i-rnam-pa mang //
> tshe-yi-tshad kyang ci-tsam mi-shes-pas //
> ngang-pas chu las 'o-ma-len-pa ltar //
> rang-gi-'dod-pa dang-du-blang-bar gyis //

zhes gdams-par-mdzad-pa bzhin-no //

> inserted root text: stanza 5
>
> ji ltar mtshan mo mun nag sprin rum na
> glog 'gyu skad cig rab snang ston pa ltar
> de bzhin sangs rgyas mthu yis brgya lam na
> 'jig rten bsod nams blo gros thang 'ga' 'byung

[1192] B: rang gzhan la phan pa'i dam pa'i chos

[1193] B: bsams te

[208] "But now, **since I have gained** or have obtained these freedoms and advantages which give me the opportunity **to accomplish** the exalted states (within saṃsāra) or the ultimate goodness (of liberation and omniscience), **that which is meaningful for a person,** referring to the three kinds of persons, through the compassion of the teacher, the supreme jewel, and also through the force of my own good karma, (then) **if I** spend this human life in a state of distraction and waste the freedoms and advantages, if I **do not practice in this** physical body the sublime dharma, which is **beneficial** for myself and others, and, (since I) cannot even be sure that I will not die tonight since the time and circumstances of my death are uncertain, then **how will a perfect opportunity** of a human body such as this **come about later** or hereafter? Since I will not have (this chance again), I will not meaninglessly waste these freedoms and advantages." Thus (Śāntideva) advises.

[209] At this time when I have gained what is hard to gain and easy to lose, this time in which I have gained a human body (endowed with) the freedoms and advantages, have met a qualified master, and have received the profound instructions, I should reflect again and again upon how this is of great significance.

[210] I should give up all worldly activities, the major as well as the minor, spending my (remaining) time on dharma practice and swiftly making use of these freedoms and advantages." As Dīpaṃkaraśrī[1194] said:

> Life is short and the fields of knowledge are many.
> Not knowing at all the duration of your life,
> You should pursue your own goal,
> Just as a swan extracts milk from water.

Thus he instructs.

Explaining the mental basis (necessary for developing bodhicitta)

> inserted root text: stanza 5
>
> Just as a flash of lightning amidst cloudbanks in the pitch black darkness of night
> Reveals, for an instant, brightly illuminated (shapes),
> In the same way, occasionally, through the might of the Buddha,
> A meritorious thought arises briefly in (the minds of) worldly people.

[1194] Dīpaṃkaraśrī [dpal mar me mdzad] or Dīpaṃkaraśrījñāna [dpal mar med mdzad ye shes] or Jobo Je Palden Atiśa [jo bo rje dpal ldan a ti śa] are names of Atiśa ((982-1054).

[211] gnyis-pa ni / dper-na[1195] **ji-ltar** na nyi-ma med-pa'i **mtshan-mo** // zla-ba med-pa'i **mun-nag** / skar-ma med-pa'i **sprin-rum-na glog-'gyu**-ba'i rkyen-gyis dus-**skad-cig**-ma-tsam-la gzugs **rab**-tu-**snang**-ba **ston-pa ltar** / dpe **de-bzhin**-du thams-cad-mkhyen-pa'i-ye-shes kyi nyi-ma ma shar-ba'i mtshan-mo // blang-dor-gyi-gnas mi-shes-pa'i mun-nag / rgyud dug-lnga dug-gsum gyis bsgribs-pa'i sprin-rum lta-bu 'dir / **sangs-rgyas** bcom-ldan-'das rnams kyi thugs-bskyed smon-lam gyi 'od-zer dang / rang-rang-gi sngon-bsags bsod-nams kyi stobs gnyis gong-'dzoms-pa'i **mthu-yis brgya-lam**-re-'ga'-zhig-**na** rmongs-pa'i mun-nag-gis bkab-pa'i **'jig-rten**-te so-so'i-skye-bo'i rgyud la **bsod-nams** te dge-ba bsgrub-par 'dod-pa'i **blo-gros**-kyi-snang-ba'am don-gnyer-gyi-'dun-pa **thang-'ga'** ste brgya-lan-re stong-lan-gnyis-tsam **'byung** gi

[212] lan-mang-po dang rgyun-ring-por mi-'byung-bas shin-tu dkon-pas na dge-ba sgrub[1196] 'dod-kyi blo re-skyes-na long-ba'i lag-gi ba-rnga ltar[1197] de-nyid mi nyams-shing gong-du-spel-ba'i

[213] phyir blo-sna-bstung ste blo-phar-mi-'dri / gros-mar-mi-byed / blo-thag rang-gis-bcad-de / rang-sna mi-lag-tu mi gtod-par sna-thag rang-mgor dkris-nas dgra gnya'-ring-du-btang / zhing tha-reng-du-byas-te / bka'-gdams-gong-ma'i chos-pa'i phug-nor-bcu dang / chos-je gtsang-pa-rgya-ras kyi drag-sngags-gsum[1198] bcas dang-len-gyis dam-pa'i-chos yang-dag-par bsgrub-par-bya'o snyam-du dam-bca'-zhing 'jug-par-bya dgos-so //

[214] de la phug-nor-bcu ni /

mi-gral-nas-bud /
khyi-gral-bsnyegs /
lha-gral-thob

ces bud-bsnyegs-thob-gsum dang /

blo-phug-chos-la-gtad /
chos-phug-sprang-la-gtad /
sprang-phug-shi-la-gtad /
shi-phug-brag-khung-skam-po-la-gtad

ces gtad-sa-bzhi dang /

[1195] A, B: dper
[1196] B: bsgrub
[1197] C: long ba'i lag gi brda ltar
[1198] B: drags sngags gsum

[211] Second, for example, **just as a flash of lightning** at **night**, when the sun is absent, during **pitch black darkness**, when there is no moon, **amidst cloudbanks**, when there are no stars, **for** just **an instant reveals brightly illuminated** shapes; **in the same way** as in this example, at night when the wisdom sun of the Omniscient One is not shining, during the pitch black darkness in which one does not know what to do and what to avoid, and amidst cloudbanks (of obscurations) that cover the mind with the five or three poisons; then **occasionally**, **through the might** of the two combined powers, (the power) of the light rays of bodhicitta and the aspirations **of the Buddha**, the Bhagavān, and (the power) of merit that beings have previously accumulated for themselves, (only then) the wish or **the thought** of accomplishing what is **meritorious** or virtuous **arises** in the minds of ordinary **worldly people**, (minds) which are (generally) obscured by the pitch black darkness of ignorance, (and then only) **briefly** (or rarely), suggesting one (thought) out of a hundred or two out of a thousand.

[212] Since (such a thought) neither arises often nor for a long time, it is extremely rare. If a thought of intending to practice virtue does, however, arise, then just like a blind person holding on to the tail of a cow, one should not let it decrease, but (cause it to) increase more and more.

[213] Therefore, be resolute, meaning that one should be committed and should enter (into practice), thinking, "I will not ask my father's permission nor will I discuss it with my mother. I will make up my own mind; not handing over the power of decision to other people, I will maintain my own independence. I will leave my enemies to themselves and let my fields dry up. I will genuinely practice the sublime dharma with tenacity, (the dharma of) the ten ultimate jewels of the old Kadampa practitioners and the three wrathful mantras of master Tsangpa Gyare."

[214] The ten ultimate jewels are:

(1) Discard the company of humans.
(2) Join the company of dogs.
(3) Attain the company of the gods.

These are the three of discarding, joining, and attaining.

(4) Direct your mind to the dharma.
(5) Conduct your dharma practice in poverty.
(6) Stay poor until you die.
(7) Die in a lonely cave.

These are the four pointers.

thebs-med-rdo-rje-sngon-la-btang /
khrel-med-rdo-rje-rjes-la-bzhag /
ye-shes-rdo-rje-rang-dang-'grogs /

zhes rdo-rje-gsum ste bcu'o //

[215] drag-sngags-gsum ni /

ci yong-ba[1199] shog /
gang-ltar 'gro-ba song[1200] /
cis-kyang dgos-pa-med /

ces-so //

[216] gnyis-pa brten-pa sems-bskyed kyi phan-yon la / sems-bskyed spyi'i phan-yon / smon-'jug so-so'i phan-yon / sems-bskyed rgyud-ldan-gyi gang-zag gi che-ba bshad-pa dang gsum las /

[217] dang-po la / dge-ba gzhan las khyad-par-du-'phags-pa'i phan-yon / ming-don gnas-gyur-ba'i phan-yon / phan-yon dpe'i sgo-nas bstan-pa dang gsum las /

> inserted root text: stanza 6
>
> de ltas dge ba nyam chung nyid la rtag /
> sdig pa stobs chen shin tu mi bzad pa /
> de ni rdzogs pa'i byang chub sems min pa /
> dge gzhan gang gis zil gyis gnon par 'gyur /

[218] dang-po ni / gong-du-bshad-pa **de-ltas** te de-lta-bas-na **dge-ba** sgrub 'dod kyi-blo ni glog-'gyu-ba dang 'dra-ba **nyams**-stobs-**chung**-ba **nyid** yin **la** dus-**rtag**-tu **sdig-pa** mi-dge-ba'i blo ni sprin-rum gyi mun-nag ltar **stobs**-nus **chen**-pos ngan-song-du 'phen-cing **shin-tu** bzlog-dka'-bas **mi-bzad-pa de ni rdzogs-pa'i-byang-chub**-kyi-**sems** rin-po-che nyi-ma ltar rab-tu-snang-ba 'di-nyid **min-pa**-ste 'di-nyid ma-gtogs **dge**-ba phal-pa **gzhan-gang-gis zil-gyis-gnon-par-'gyur**-te / mi-'gyur la / de'i rgyu-mtshan /

[1199] A, B: ci yongs ba; C: ci yongs pa
[1200] C: songs

(8) Start out with the vajra of no discouragement.
(9) End with the vajra of no need to be ashamed (of faults).
(10) Live with the vajra of wisdom.

These are the three vajras; together they are ten.

[215] The three wrathful mantras are:

(1) Come what may.
(2) Wherever (dharma) leads me is fine.
(3) I do not need anything whatsoever (other than dharma).

Explaining the benefits of generating bodhicitta, that which is supported (by the physical and mental basis)

[216] Second, the benefits of generating bodhicitta, that which is supported (by the physical and mental basis), has three (points): (1) the general benefits of bodhicitta, (2) the individual benefits of (the bodhicitta of) aspiration and application, and (3) the greatness of a person who is endowed with a mind that has developed bodhicitta.

The general benefits of bodhicitta

[217] The first has three (sections): (1) the benefits of (bodhicitta) being far superior to other virtues; (2) the benefit of (bodhicitta) causing a transformation in name and significance; and (3) demonstrating the benefits (of bodhicitta) by means of examples.

The benefits of (bodhicitta) being far superior to other virtues

> inserted root text: stanza 6
>
> Hence, virtue is feeble while at all times
> The great power of negativity is utterly unbearable.
> Except for perfect bodhicitta
> What other virtues could overcome (this negativity)?

[218] First: **Hence**, meaning 'for that reason', as explained before, a thought of intending to practice **virtue is feeble**, just like a flash of lightning, **while at all times** the thoughts of non-virtue and **negativity**, which are like the pitch black darkness of cloudbanks, are **unbearable** because their **great power** is **utterly** difficult to reverse, and it throws us into the lower states. **Except for the** precious and **perfect bodhicitta**, which completely illuminates (everything) like the sun, **what other** ordinary **virtues could overcome** (this negativity)**?** None. The reason for this is:

> inserted root text: stanza 7
>
> bskal pa du mar rab dgongs mdzad pa yi /
> thub dbang rnams kyis 'di nyid phan par gzigs /
> 'dis ni tshad med skye bo'i tshogs rnams kyis /
> bde mchog bde blag nyid du thob par byed /

[219] **bskal-pa**-grangs-med-gsum sogs **du-mar** mtha'-yas-pa'i sems-can rnams la gnas-skabs dang mthar-thug gi phan-pa dang bde-ba'i thabs 'ba'-zhig la **rab**-tu-**dgongs**-par-**mdzad-pa yi thub-dbang** rdzogs-pa'i-sangs-rgyas **rnams kyis** sems-can rnams kyi sngar-byas-kyi sdig-pa 'dags-pa / phyin-chad-kyi sdig-rgyun-gcod-pa / rang-rgyud kyi nyon-mongs zil-gyis-gnon-pa / dge-ba'i-rtsa-ba phra-mo yang gong-du-spel-ba / mthar-thug byang-chub-chen-po 'thob-pa la byang-chub-kyi-sems **'di-nyid** kyis **phan-par-gzigs**-shing gdul-bya-rnams la bstan-par-mdzad-de /

[220] byang-chub-kyi-sems **'dis ni** grangs dang **tshad** gzhal-du-**med**-pa'i **skye-bo'i-tshogs rnams kyis** gnas-skabs-kyi phan-pa dang / mthar-thug gi **bde-mchog** bla-na-med-pa sangs-rgyas-kyi-go-'phang **bde-blag-nyid-du** ste / dka'-tshegs-med-par dus-gsum kun-tu **thob-par-byed**-pa'i phyir-ro //

> inserted root text: stanza 8
>
> srid pa'i sdug bsngal brgya phrag gzhom 'dod cing /
> sems can mi bde bsal bar 'dod pa dang /
> bde mang brgya phrag spyod par 'dod pas kyang /
> byang chub sems nyid rtag tu btang mi bya /

[221] des-na rang-gi **srid-pa'i-sdug-bsngal** skye-rga-na-'chi la-sogs-pa **brgya-phrag**-mang-po **gzhom**-par **'dod-cing** thabs-la-'jug-pa dang / gzhan **sems-can** rnams kyi 'di-dang-phyi-ma'i **mi-bde**-ba thams-cad **bsal-bar 'dod-pa dang** / rang-gzhan thams-cad kyi[1201] gnas-skabs dang mthar-thug gi **bde**-ba **mang**-po **brgya-phrag** du-mar **spyod-par 'dod-pas kyang** gang-'dod 'grub-pa'i thabs **byang-chub**-kyi-**sems** 'di-**nyid** dus-**rtag-tu gtang**-bar-**mi-bya** ste rang-rgyud la bzung-bar-bya'o //

1201 A, B: rang gzhan thams cad kyis

> inserted root text: stanza 7
>
> The mighty munis, who have contemplated for many aeons,
> Have seen that this (bodhicitta) is beneficial
> Because it causes unfathomable masses of beings
> To attain supreme bliss easily.

[219] The perfect buddhas, **the mighty munis**, **who have contemplated for many aeons**, such as for three countless aeons and more, upon the only method that brings temporary and ultimate benefit and bliss to all infinite sentient beings, (they) **have seen that this** bodhicitta **is beneficial** because it purifies the negative deeds that beings have previously committed, disrupts the continuity of negative deeds in the future, outshines the afflictions in their minds, develops even the most subtle roots of virtue, and ultimately causes them to reach great enlightenment; (therefore, they) teach it to beings.

[220] (This is) **because it**, bodhicitta, **causes**, throughout all the three times, **masses of beings** that **cannot be fathomed** by numbers or extent **to attain** temporary benefits as well as the ultimate and **supreme bliss**, the level of unexcelled buddhahood, **easily**, meaning without any hardship.

> inserted root text: stanza 8
>
> Those who wish to overcome the hundreds of sufferings of existence,
> Those who wish to remove the unhappiness of beings,
> And those who wish them to enjoy multitudinous (forms of) bliss
> Should never forsake bodhicitta.

[221] Therefore, **those who wish to overcome the** many **hundreds of** (types of) **suffering of** individual **existence**, such as birth, aging, sickness, death, and so forth, and (who wish to) enter into the methods (to do so), and **those who wish to remove** all **the unhappiness** of this and future lives **of** all other **beings**, **and those who wish** for all of **them**, themselves and others, **to enjoy** various, **multitudinous (forms of)** temporary and ultimate **bliss should never forsake this bodhicitta**—the method to accomplish whatever they wish—but should keep it in their minds.

inserted root text: stanza 9

byang chub sems skyes gyur na skad cig gis /
'khor ba'i btson rar bsdams pa'i nyam thag rnams /
bde gshegs rnams kyi sras zhes brjod bya zhing /
'jig rten lha mir bcas pas phyag byar 'gyur /

[222] gnyis-pa ni / lus la pho-mo // na-tshod la rgan-gzhon[1202] // rigs la bzang-ngan-med-par // rang-rgyud la rin-chen **byang-chub**-kyi-**sems** 'di-nyid **skyes**-par-**gyur-na skad-cig-gis** te skyes-ma-thag-pa'i skad-cig-de-nyid la sngar **'khor-ba'i btson-rar**[1203] las dang nyon-mongs-pa'i lcags-sgrog-gis **bsdams-pa'i**[1204] **nyam-thag**-pa'i[1205] sems-can-**rnams** kyang ming gnas-'gyur-te **bde**-bar-**gshegs**-pa-**rnams-kyi-sras**[1206] byang-chub-sems-dpa' **zhes** ming-gi cod-paṇ-dpyang-zhing **brjod**-par-**bya**-bar-'gyur-**zhing** /

[223] don gnas-'gyur te **'jig-rten**-pa **lha**-dang-**mir-bcas-pas phyag-byar**-te phyag-mchod bkur-sti-bya-ba'i gnas-su-'**gyur**-zhing / der-ma-zad byang-chub-sems-dpa'-rnams la sangs-rgyas bcom-ldan-'das-rnams kyang bkur-sti-bya-rung-ste / byang-chub-kyi-sems ni sangs-rgyas rnams kyi bla-ma yin-pa'i phyir-ro gsungs /

[224] gsum-pa la gser-'gyur-gyi-dpes sangs-rgyas-thob-par bstan-pa / rin-po-che'i dpes don-che-bar bstan-pa / 'bras-bu-can gyi ljon-shing gi dpes dge-rtsa mi-zad cing gong-du-'phel-bar bstan-pa / skyel-ma-dpa'-bo'i dpes nges-pa'i-sdig-pa zil-gyis-gnon-par bstan-pa / dus-mtha'i-me'i dpes ma-nges-pa'i-sdig-pa drung-nas-'byin-par bstan-pa / 'dir ma bshad-pa gzhung gzhan-du zhal-'phang-ba dang drug las /

inserted root text: stanza 10

gser 'gyur rtsi yi rnam pa mchog lta bur /
mi gtsang lus 'di blangs nas rgyal ba'i sku /
rin chen rin thang med par sgyur bas na /
byang chub sems zhes bya ba rab brtan zungs /

1202 B: rgas gzhon

1203 A: btson rar

1204 A: bsdams pa'i

1205 A, B: nyams thag pa'i

1206 A: rnams gyi sras

The benefit of (bodhicitta) causing a transformation in name and significance

> inserted root text: stanza 9
>
> Once this bodhicitta has taken birth, in that (very) instant,
> (Even) those who were captured in the prison of saṃsāra
> Will be called 'sons of the sugatas'
> And will be revered by (all) the world, including gods and men.

[222] Second, **once this precious bodhicitta has taken birth** in one's mind, regardless of whether one has a male or female body, whether one is of old or young age, of good or bad family, **in that very instant**, meaning at the very moment it has taken birth, even **those miserable ones**, those beings **who were** previously **captured** with the iron chains of karma and afflictions **in the prison of saṃsāra**, are transformed in name, and being adorned with the tiara of the name 'bodhisattvas, **sons of the sugatas**', they **will be** so **called**.

[223] They are also transformed in significance **and will be revered by (all) the world, including gods and men**. They **will** become an object of reverence, to be offered to and honored. Moreover, it is said to be proper that even the buddha bhagavāns honor the bodhisattvas, since bodhicitta is the teacher of (all) the buddhas.

Demonstrating the benefits (of bodhicitta) by means of examples

[224] The third has six (points): (1) demonstrating (that bodhicitta leads to) the attainment of buddhahood through the example of alchemy; (2) demonstrating (bodhicitta's) great importance through the example of jewels; (3) demonstrating (bodhicitta's) inexhaustible and ever-increasing root of virtue through the example of a fruit-bearing, wish-fulfilling tree; (4) demonstrating how (bodhicitta) outshines negativity that leads to the certain (experience of negativity's fruition) through the example of the helpful hero; (5) demonstrating how (bodhicitta) totally eradicates negativity that leads to the uncertain (experience of negativity's fruition) through the example of the fire at the end of an aeon; and (6) references to other textbooks which are not explained in this (text).

Demonstrating (that bodhicitta leads to) the attainment of buddhahood through the example of alchemy

> inserted root text: stanza 10
>
> (Bodhicitta) is just like the supreme kind of alchemical elixir,
> For it transforms this impure body we have taken
> Into the priceless jewel of the Victor's body.
> Therefore, very firmly seize (this elixir) called bodhicitta!

[225] dang-po ni / dpe gser-'gyur-gyi-rtsi / dpe-can byang-chub-kyi-sems / mtshungs-chos ngan-pa-zhig bzang-por bsgyur-ba-ste /

[226] dngul-chu'i-rigs gser-du-snang-ba zhes-bya-ba'i **gser-'gyur**-kyi-**rtsi yi rnam-pa mchog**-tu-gyur-pa srang-gcig gis lcags srang-stong gser bzang-por bsgyur-nus-pa **lta-bur**[1207] **mi-gtsang**-ba'i-rdzas mang-po'i rang-bzhin du gyur-pa'i **lus** dman-pa **'di**-nyid nyan-thos ltar 'dor-'dod-kyi-blo mi bskyed-par gzhan-don-du tshe-rabs mang-por dang-du-**blangs-nas** byang-chub-kyi-sems-kyis zin-na **rgyal-ba'i-sku** srid-zhi'i-rgud-pa mtha'-dag las skyob-cing don-gnyis phun-sum-tshogs-pa stsol-ba'i[1208] yid-bzhin-gyi-nor-bu **rin-chen rin-thang** gzhal-du-**med**-pa'i yon-tan dang ldan-**par bsgyur-bas-na** nus-pa de-lta-bu'i rtsi khyad-par-can **byang-chub**-kyi-**sems zhes-bya-ba** 'di-nyid **rab**-tu-**brtan**-zhing g.yo-ba-med-par **zungs**-shig ces gdams-pa[1209] ltar rang-gis bzung-bar dam-bca' dgos-so //

> inserted root text: stanza 11
>
> 'gro ba'i ded dpon gcig pu tshad med blos /
> legs par yongs su brtags na rin che bas /
> 'gro ba'i gnas dang bral bar 'dod pa rnams /
> rin chen byang chub sems legs brtan par bzung /

[227] gnyis-pa ni / dper-na rgya-mtsho'i-gling du 'gro-ba'i tshong-pa rnams-kyis ded-dpon mkhas-pa bsten-cing des brtags-pa'i[1210] nor-bu la mchog-tu-'dzin-pa ltar thar-pa dang thams-cad-mkhyen-pa'i gling tu **'gro-ba'i** ste 'gro-bar-'dod-pa-rnams kyi **ded-dpon gcig-pu** ste 'gran-zla-dang-bral-ba'i sangs-rgyas-nyid kyi **tshad-med**-pa'i-**blos** te thams-cad-mkhyen-pa'i-ye-shes kyis nor-'khrul-med-par **legs-par yongs-su** ste bskal-par **brtags-na** dam-pa'i-chos kun las byang-chub-kyi-sems 'dis sangs-rgyas-thob-par-'gyur-bas-na **rin-che-bas** te phan-yon che-bar gzigs-shing gdul-bya-rnams la bstan-par-mdzad-pa des-na / rigs-drug gis bsdus-pa'i **'gro-ba'i-gnas**-ris kyi sdug-bngal mtha'-dag **dang bral-bar-'dod-pa-rnams** kyis **rin-chen byang-chub**-kyi-**sems** de **legs**-par ste sbyor-dngos-rjes-gsum tshang-bas[1211] rang-rgyud-la-'dzin-cing / dran-shes bag-yod kyis mi-nyams-par **brtan-par-bzung**-bar-bya'o //

[1207] C: lta bu
[1208] A, C: rtsol ba'i
[1209] A, C: gdam pa
[1210] B: brtag pa'i
[1211] B: tshang bar

[225] First, the example is that of the elixir of alchemy. Bodhicitta is what is indicated by this example. (Bodhicitta's) function is to transform something base into something noble.

[226] **It is just like the supreme kind of alchemical elixir**, a type of mercury known as 'Gold Maker', one ounce of which has the power to transform one thousand ounces of iron into noble gold; **for** if we embrace with bodhicitta **this** inferior **body**, consisting by nature of many **impure** substances, which **we have** voluntarily **taken** for many lifetimes for the welfare of others, without developing a mindset of wishing to discard it like the śravakas do, (then) **it,** (bodhicitta), **transforms** (this impure body) into **the Victor's body**, endowed with the qualities of a **jewel** whose **price** cannot be fathomed, the wish-fulfilling jewel which grants protection from all impediments of worldly existence and peace as well as the perfection of the two benefits. **Therefore**, I advise you, "**Very firmly** and without wavering **seize** this special elixir **called bodhicitta**, which possesses such powers!" Following this advice, you should commit yourself to adopting it.

Demonstrating (bodhicitta's) great importance through the example of jewels

> inserted root text: stanza 11
>
> Since the immeasurable mind of the Sole Guide of Beings
> (Saw) its great value when he thoroughly examined it,
> (All) those who wish to be free from the realms of beings
> Should firmly take hold of this precious bodhicitta in an excellent manner.

[227] Second, for instance, just like merchants who travel to islands in the ocean rely on a skillful guide and hold in high esteem jewels that he has examined, (so) **those who wish to be free from** all the suffering of **the realms of beings**, consisting of the six realms, **should firmly take hold of this precious bodhicitta in an excellent manner**—that is to say keeping it in their own minds by having the beginning, the main part, and the conclusion (of the precept-taking ceremony) complete, and by (practicing) mindfulness, introspection and heedfulness to prevent its deterioration—**since the immeasurable mind** of the incomparable Buddha himself, the omniscient wisdom **of the Sole Guide of Beings**, (the guide) of (all) those who wish to go to the island of liberation and omniscience, **when he thoroughly**, meaning for aeons and without error or deception, **examined it**, saw its **great value**, its great benefits; and thus, he taught it to all those to be tamed, because among all sublime teachings, buddhahood is attained through this bodhicitta.

inserted root text: stanza 12

dge ba gzhan kun chu shing bzhin du ni /
'bras bu bskyed nas zad par 'gyur ba nyid /
byang chub sems kyi ljon shing rtag par yang /
'bras bu 'byin pas mi zad 'phel bar 'gyur /

[228] gsum-pa ni / byang-chub-sems kyis ma zin-pa'i **dge-ba gzhan**-gang ji-snyed-pa **kun** ni **chu-shing**-gi-sdong-po rnams ni 'bras-bu lan-gcig smin-nas rtsa-ba zad-de[1212] slar-mi-skye-ba **bzhin-du ni** bsod-nams-cha-mthun-gyi-dge-bas mngon-mtho'i **'bras-bu-bskyed-nas** 'dzad-cing / nyan-rang-gi phung-po lhag-med-du-**zad-par-'gyur-ba nyid** yin la /

[229] **byang-chub-sems kyi** zin-pa'i dge-ba ni dpag-bsam-gyi-shing sogs **ljon-shing**-bzang-po rnams ni 'bras-bu mi-zad-cing slar-'phel-ba bzhin-du **rtag-par-yang** rnam-smin-gyi-'bras-bu gnas-skabs lha-mi'i bde-'bras phun-sum-tshogs-pa rgya-chen-po thob-cing[1213] mi-'dzad la /

[230] rgyu-mthun-gyi-'bras-bu gong-'phel-du-gyur-nas mthar-thug sangs-rgyas-kyi-sku bsod-nams-kyi-phung-po'i nang-du bgrang-du-yod-pa'i **'bras-bu** rgya-chen-po **'byin-pas**-kyang **mi-zad**-cing gong-nas-gong-du lhag-par-'**phel-bar-'gyur**-ba yin-no //

inserted root text: stanza 13

sdig pa shin tu mi bzad byas na yang /
dpa' la brten nas 'jigs pa chen po ltar /
gang la brten nas yud kyis sgrol 'gyur ba /
de la bag can rnams kyis cis mi brten /

[1212] A, C: rtsa bzad de

[1213] B: lha mi'i bde 'bras rgya chen po thob cing

Demonstrating (bodhicitta's) inexhaustible and ever-increasing root of virtue through the example of a fruit-bearing, wish-fulfilling tree

> inserted root text: stanza 12
>
> All other virtues are like plantain trees;
> After coming to fruition they (simply) cease to be.
> But the tree of bodhicitta constantly
> Gives fruit and increases unceasingly.

[228] Third, **all other virtues**, as many as there may be, that are not embraced by bodhicitta **are like** the trunks of **plantain trees**, which die from their roots once their fruit has ripened and will not again bear fruit. Likewise, virtues that concord with (worldly) merit simply cease to be **after coming to fruition** (leading to rebirth in) the exalted states (within saṃsāra). Moreover, the aggregates of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas **will cease to be** without remainder.

[229] **But** virtues that are embraced by **bodhicitta** are like **the** noble **tree**, the wish-fulfilling tree, the fruit of which is inexhaustible and continues to increase. The fully ripened result is that one will **constantly** attain the abundant and perfect fruition of the temporary happiness of men and gods. This will not cease.

[230] The results similar to the cause will increase more and more and will ultimately **give** vast **fruit**, contributing to 'the mass of merit' of the Buddha's body. Thus, (the results similar to the cause) will continue to **increase** more and more **unceasingly**.

Demonstrating how (bodhicitta) outshines negativity that leads to the certain (experience of negativity's fruition) through the example of the helpful hero

> inserted root text: stanza 13
>
> Although I have committed the most unbearable negative deeds,
> By entrusting myself to (bodhicitta), I shall be instantaneously liberated,
> Just as (one will be liberated from) great fear by entrusting oneself to a hero.
> Why do the ignorant not devote themselves to this?

[231] bzhi-pa ni / chos-spang-gi-las sogs dkon-mchog-gsum la gnod-pa dang mtshams-med-pa la-sogs-pa'i **sdig-pa shin-tu mi-bzad**-pa dmyal-ba mnar-med-pa'i sdug-bsngal myong nges-**byas**-pa yin-**na-yang** / dper-na pha-bsad-pa'i nyes-can-gyi-mi-zhig skyel-ma-**dpa'**-bo **la brten-nas** pha de'i bu'i drung-du song-na'ang bu'i sha-len-snyogs-pa'i dgra'i gnod-pa'ang **'jigs-pa chen-po** las yud-tsam-gyis sgrol-ba **ltar** byang-chub-kyi-sems rin-po-che **gang la brten-nas** sdig-chen de'i 'bras-bu dmyal-ba'i sdug-bsngal las **yud-kyis** te yud-tsam-gyis **sgrol**-bar-'**gyur-ba** ste /

[232] der mi skye-zhing skyes-na'ang dar-gyi pho-long-bsdabs-pa tsam las mi myong-bar thar-bar-'gyur-bas-na byang-chub-kyi-sems **de la** sdig-pa la skrag-cing **bag**-yod-pa-**can-rnams kyis cis mi brten**-te shin-tu brten-par rigs-so //

> inserted root text: stanza 14 / first part
>
> des ni dus mtha'i me bzhin sdig chen rnams /
> skad cig gcig gis nges par sreg par byed /

[233] lnga-pa ni / byang-chub-kyi-sems **des ni dus-mtha'i** ste bskal-pa-'jig-pa'i-**mes** snod-kyi-'jig-rten rtsva-sbur thal-ba-tsam yang mi-lus-par lhag-med-du skad-cig-gis bsreg-pa **bzhin**-du gong-du bshad-pa las gzhan mi brgya bsad-pa lta-bu'i **sdig**-pa-**chen**-po-**rnams** dus-**skad-cig-gcig-gis** myong-bya lhag-med-du **nges-par bsreg**-pa'am dag-**par-byed**-pas-na de la ci'i-phyir mi bsten-te bsten dgos-so //

> inserted root text: stanza 14 / second part
>
> de yi phan yon dpag tu med pa dag /
> byams mgon blo dang ldan pas nor bzang bshad /

[231] Fourth, **although I have committed the most unbearable negative deeds**, such as harming the three jewels by giving up the dharma and the like, as well as the five crimes with immediate retribution and will certainly experience the suffering of the Avīcī hell, just as, for example, a man who has (committed) the misdeed of having killed (someone's) father will—even if he goes to the son of the father (he has killed)—be instantaneously freed **from great fear** or from being harmed by an enemy (such as) the son taking revenge, **by** (means of) **entrusting himself to a** helpful **hero**; **likewise**, **by entrusting myself to** the precious bodhicitta, **I shall be liberated instantaneously**, meaning swiftly, from the suffering of the hells, which are the fruition of such great negativity, and will not take rebirth there.

[232] However, if I should be born there, I will be liberated as swiftly as a silken ball rebounds (from the ground) without experiencing (any suffering). That being the case, **why do** all **the** (people) who are afraid of negativity but who are **ignorant not devote themselves to this** bodhicitta, since it is appropriate to entrust oneself to it completely?

Demonstrating how (bodhicitta) totally eradicates negativity that leads to the uncertain (experience of negativity's fruition) through the example of the fire at the end of an aeon

> inserted root text: stanza 14 / first part
>
> Just like the fire at the end of an aeon, this (bodhicitta)
> Definitely consumes in one instant (even) great negative deeds.

[233] Fifth, **this** bodhicitta **definitely consumes** and purifies **in one instant**—leaving nothing behind to be experienced—**great negative deeds** even more than has been explained above, such as (even) having killed one hundred people, **just like the fire at the end of an aeon**—meaning (the fire) which destroys an aeon—which burns in one instant without remainder the vessel-like world, not leaving behind even as much as the ashes of withered grass. Therefore, why would one not rely on this (bodhicitta)? One should rely on it.

References to other textbooks not explained here

> inserted root text: stanza 14 / second part
>
> The wise Maitreyanātha taught
> Its unfathomable benefits to Sudhana.

[234] drug-pa ni / byang-chub-kyi-sems **de yi phan-yon** blos **dpag-du-med**-cing tshad gzhal-du-med-pas mtha'-yas-**pa** gzhan-**dag** ni rgyal-ba'i rgyal-tshab chen-po rje-btsun **byams**-pa-**mgon**-po **blo**-shes-rab-**dang-ldan-pas** tshong-dpon nor-rab-tu-brtan-pa'i bu byang-chub-sems-dpa' gzhon-nu-**nor-bzang** la dpe nyis-brgya-dang-sum-bcu'i sgo-nas **bshad**-pa ni phal-po-che-sdong-pos-brgyan-pa'i-le'u las shes-par-bya'o //

[235] zhes zhal-'phang-bar-mdzad-de / ji-ltar-na / sdong-po-bkod-pa las / byang-chub-sems-dpa' nor-bzang gis 'phags-pa 'jam-dpal gyi drung-du sems-bskyed-cing 'jam-dpal gyis lung-bstan-te dge-slong sprin-gyi-dpal gyi drung-du mngags-pa bzhin rim-pa-ltar dge-ba'i-bshes-gnyen brgya-dang-bcu bsten-pa rnams kyis byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-spyod-pa sna-re-re las ma gsungs-shing mthar lho-phyogs rgya-mtsho'i 'gram-du byang-chub-sems-dpa' byams-pa bzhugs-pa'i drung-du byon-tshe rje-btsun byams-pas 'khor rnams la gsungs-pa /

[236] ltos-shig bsam-pa yongs-su-dag-pa 'di //
nor-bzang nor-rnams-rab-tu-brtan-pa'i bu //
byang-chub-spyod-pa dam-pa yongs 'tshol-zhing //
mkhas-pa nga yi drung-du nye-bar-'ong //
legs-par-'ongs-sam snying-rje byams byung khyod //
byams-pa'i dkyil-'khor yangs-pa legs-'ongs-sam //
legs-par-'ongs-sam blta-na rab-zhi-ba //
dka'-ba-spyod-tshe dub-par ma-gyur-tam //
rnam-dag bsam-ldan tshur-shog 'ongs-pa-legs //

[237] zhes-pa la-sogs-pa gsungs-te dbugs-dbyung gzengs-bstod-mdzad-pa la sngar-gyi lo-rgyus zhus-te byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-spyod-pa gsung-bar zhus-pa-na / rje-btsun gyis khong gi pho-brang rnam-par-snang-mdzad-kyi-rgyan-gyis-brgyan-pa'i-snying-po la ltos-shig gsungs-pa ltar mjal-bas pho-brang gi mig-tshe re-re-bzhin dbu dang yan-lag gi sbyin-pa-gtong-pa[1214] sogs byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-spyod-pa la rje-btsun byams-pas slob-tshul mthong-bas / nor-bzang-gis byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-spyod-pa mtha'-dag thugs-su-chud-cing /

[238] byams-mgon gyis byang-chub-sems kyi phan-yon rigs-kyi-bu byang-chub-kyi-sems ni sangs-rgyas kyi chos thams-cad bskyed-pa'i sa-bon lta-bu'o // 'gro-ba thams-cad kyi dkar-po'i-chos-rnams 'phel-bar-byed-pas zhing lta-bu'o // 'jig-rten thams-cad rten-pa'i sa lta-bu'o // zhes-pa nas / rigs-kyi-bu byang-chub-kyi-sems de ni yon-tan de-dag dang phan-yon gyi bye-brag tshad-med-pa gzhan-dag dang yang ldan-no zhes-pa la-sogs-pa rgya-cher gsungs-so //

[239] de-ltar phan-yon rnams las sangs-rgyas-thob-pa / dge-ba-'phel-ba / sdig-pa-'dag-pa gsum gtso-bo'o //

[1214] B: dbu dang yan lag sbyin pa gtong ba

[234] Sixth, since the **benefits** of this bodhicitta **cannot be fathomed** or measured by mind, they are infinite. The other (benefits) were taught by means of two hundred and thirty examples **by** the great representative of the Victor, **the wise** and venerable **Maitreyanātha**, to Bodhisattva Kumāra Sudhana, the son of the wealthy merchant Dhana. Learn (these examples) from the *Gaṇḍha-vyūha* section of the *Avataṃsaka-sūtra*.

[235] As (Śāntideva) made this reference, what does (the sūtra) say? From the *Gaṇḍha-vyūha*: "When Bodhisattva Sudhana developed bodhicitta in front of the noble Mañjuśrī, Mañjuśrī gave him a directive, sending him to the fully ordained monk Meghaśrī and others. The one hundred and ten spiritual guides on whom he successively relied each taught him only a single (aspect of) bodhisattva conduct. Finally, when he went to Bodhisattva Maitreya, who was living in the South on the shore of the ocean, the venerable Maitreya spoke to his entourage:

[236] Look! This is an utterly pure intention.
Sudhana is a son who is most well-endowed with wealth,
But searching for the sublime conduct of the bodhisattvas,
He has come before me, the wise one.
Welcome, you who have gained compassion and kindness.
Welcome to the vast maṇḍala of Maitreya.
Welcome! When looking at you, (I see) you are most peaceful.
As you underwent hardships, are you not tired?
You with utterly pure intent, come hither, you are welcome.

[237] Having thus spoken, he comforted and encouraged (Sudhana). After recounting the story of his past, (Sudhana) requested (Maitreya) to teach him the bodhisattva conduct. The venerable (Maitreya) told him, "Take a look at our (my) palace (called) 'Essence decorated with the ornaments of Vairocana'!" When (Sudhana) looked, he saw in every room of the palace how venerable Maitreya practiced the bodhisattva conduct, such as sacrificing his head, limbs, and so forth. Thus, Sudhana came to understand all (forms of) the bodhisattva conduct.

[238] Maitreyanātha taught extensively with regard to the benefits of bodhicitta: "Noble son! Bodhicitta is like a seed which gives birth to all the qualities of a buddha. It is like a field because it increases good qualities in all sentient beings. It is like the earth because it supports the whole world.…Noble son! Bodhicitta is endowed with these (two hundred and thirty) qualities and even further immeasurable aspects of its benefits."

[239] Among the benefits (of bodhicitta), the most important are these three: (1) it leads to the attainment of enlightenment, (2) it increases virtue, and (3) it purifies negative deeds.

[240] gnyis-pa smon-'jug so-so'i phan-yon la / smon-'jug-gi dbye-ba / phan-yon-gyi khyad-par / lung-rigs-kyi sgo-nas bsgrub-pa dang gsum las /

[241] dang-po ni / de la theg-pa-chen-po'i lam dang 'bras-bu'i yon-tan thams-cad byang-chub-mchog-tu-sems-bskyed-pa las 'byung-bas-na thog-mar sems-bskyed dgos la / sems-bskyed de la dbye-na rags-pa brda las byung-ba kun-rdzob-sems-bskyed dang / phra-ba chos-nyid kyis thob-pa don-dam-sems-bskyed gnyis las /

[242] dang-po ni / byams-pas /

> grogs-stobs rgyu-stobs rtsa-ba'i-stobs //
> thos-stobs dge-ba-goms-pa las //
> mi-brtan-pa dang brtan 'byung-ba //
> gzhan-gyis-bstan-pa'i sems-bskyed bshad //

[243] ces grogs dge-ba'i-bshes-gnyen dang 'phrad-pa sngon gzhon-nu gsum gyis sangs-rgyas mchog-zung-gnyis dang bcas-pa mjal-ba'i tshe gcig-gis sangs-rgyas dang gzhan gnyis kyis mchog-zung-gnyis su smon-par-byas-pa phyis-su bdag-cag-gi ston-pa dang mchog-zung-gnyis yin-pa lta-bu dang /

[244] rgyu rigs-sad-pa[1215] / rtsa-ba snying-rje-skyes-pa / zab-mo'i-chos[1216] thos-pa'i-stobs dang / dge-ba-goms-pa bsod-nams-kyi-tshogs-bsags-pa las[1217] skyes-pa ste dang-po mi-brtan-zhing phyi-ma-bzhi brtan-pa yin la[1218] /

1215 B: rgyu rigs sad pa dang /

1216 A: zab mos chos

1217 B: bsod nams kyi tshogs bsags las

1218 B: dang po mi brtan zhing phyi ma brtan pa yin la

The individual benefits of (the bodhicitta of) aspiration and of application

[240] Second, the individual benefits of (the bodhicitta of) aspiration and of application have three (subsections): (1) distinguishing between (the bodhicitta of) aspiration and of application, (2) differentiating their benefits, and (3) establishing (the benefits of bodhicitta) by means of scriptures and reasoning.

Distinguishing between (the bodhicitta of) aspiration and of application

[241] First, because all the qualities of the Mahāyāna path and its fruition arise from the development of supreme bodhicitta, one must at the outset develop bodhicitta. For the development of bodhicitta, two (subdivisions) can be distinguished: (1) the development of relative bodhicitta, achieved through tangible indicators, and (2) the development of absolute bodhicitta, achieved through subtle dharmatā.

Development of relative bodhicitta achieved through tangible indicators

[242] First, Maitreya said (in the *Sūtrālaṃkāra)*:

> (1) Through the power of a friend, (2) the power of the cause, (3) the power of the root,
> (4) The power of studying, and (5) (the power of) familarization with virtue,
> (Relative bodhicitta) arises (first) unstably and (later) stably.
> Thus, I explain the development of (relative) bodhicitta, which is (primarily) revealed by others.

[243] (1) (Relative bodhicitta) may be born when meeting the helpful (power) of a spiritual guide, just as when in former times three young people went to meet a buddha and his two chief disciples. One made aspirations to become a buddha and the other two (aspired) to become (that buddha's) two chief disciples. Later, one (of these three young people) become our teacher, (Buddha Śākyamuni), and the other two (became) his chief disciples.

[244] (Similarly, relative bodhicitta) may be born (in the following ways): (2) through the power of the cause, awakening to the (Mahāyāna) family; (3) through (the power of) the root, the birth of compassion; (4) through the power of studying the profound dharma; and (5) through becoming accustomed to virtue, by gathering the accumulation of merit. The first (power) is unstable, but the latter four are stable.

[245] de'i mtshan-gzhi gang bskyed-na / slob-dpon thogs-med-sku-mched ni sems-byung la 'dod / 'phags-seng-gnyis gtso-sems la bzhed /

[246] kun-mkhyen-chen-pos / gtso-sems-bskyed-pas sems-byung zhar-la-bskyed-par gsungs-pas-na / snga-ma-gnyis kyang gtso-che-ba tsam la dgongs-te gsungs-pa las gtso-sems-bskyed-pas sems-byung dang / sems-byung-bskyed-pas gtso-sems kyang bskyed-par-'gyur-bas dgongs-pa 'gal-med-du gsungs /

[247] mtshan-nyid / gang-gi-ched-du-bya-ba snying-rjes gzhan-don la dmigs-pa dang / gang-ched-du-bya-ba shes-rab kyis rdzogs-byang la dmigs-pa'i don-gnyis sam zur-gnyis dang ldan-pa-ste /

> don-gnyis-ldan-pas sems-'byung ba //

zhes dang /

> sems-bskyed-pa ni gzhan-don phyir //
> yang-dag-rdzogs-pa'i-sangs-rgyas 'dod //

ces-so //

[248] gnyis-pa don-dam-sems-bskyed ni / bsgom-pa'i-stobs las skyes-pa-ste / byams-pas /

> rdzogs-pa'i-sangs-rgyas rab-mnyes-byas //
> bsod-nams ye-shes tshogs rab-bsags //
> chos la mi-rtog-ye-shes ni //
> skyes phyir de ni dam-par-'dod //

[249] ces yongs-'dzin-dam-pa rdzogs-pa'i-sangs-rgyas brgya sogs mnyes-par-byas-te man-ngag gi lung-blangs-nas / tshogs-dam-pa bsod-nams dang ye-shes-kyi tshogs bskal-pa-grangs-med-gcig-tu bsags-pa las rtogs-pa-dam-pa chos thams-cad la mi-rtog-pa'i-ye-shes sa-dang-po'i-bden-pa mngon-sum mthong-ba'o //

[245] On what basis is (bodhicitta) developed? Master Asaṅga and his brother[1219] interpreted (bodhicitta) as a 'mental pattern', while Ārya Vimuktasena and Haribhadra interpreted (bodhicitta) as a 'dominant mind'.

[246] The Great Omniscient One (Longchen Rabjam) said, "By developing a 'dominant mind', the 'mental pattern' is developed together with it." Therefore, the two earlier (statements) were simply interpreted as (denoting) the most important aspects (of bodhicitta). Actually, by generating a 'dominant mind', a 'mental pattern' is already developed, and by developing a 'mental pattern', a 'dominant mind' is already generated. Thus, (Longchenpa) explained their interpretations as being without any contradiction.

[247] Concerning the characteristics (of bodhicitta): (Bodhicitta) is endowed with two benefits or with two aspects. Toward whom is it aimed? With compassion it focuses on the benefit of others. Toward what does it aim? With wisdom it focuses on perfect enlightenment. It is said (in the *Sūtrālaṃkāra*):

> As it is endowed with two purposes, it is a mental pattern.

And (furthermore from the *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*):

> The development of bodhicitta is to aspire to
> Perfect and complete enlightenment for the benefit of others.

Development of absolute bodhicitta achieved through subtle dharmatā

[248] Second, the development of absolute bodhicitta is born from the power of meditation. As Maitreya said (in the Sūtrālaṃkāra):

> When the perfect Buddha is pleased,
> When the accumulations of merit and wisdom are well-gathered,
> When non-conceptual wisdom concerning all phenomena has been born,
> This is understood to be the absolute (bodhicitta).

[249] The sublime teacher (Buddha Śākyamuni) delighted hundreds of perfect buddhas, received teachings of oral instructions, and, by gathering for one incalculable aeon the sublime accumulations—the accumulations of merit and wisdom—he directly perceived the truth of the first bhūmi, the wisdom that does not conceptualize any phenomena, the sublime realization.

[1219] Asaṅga and his brother Vasubandhu [thogs med sku mched]

> inserted root text: stanza 15
>
> byang chub sems de mdor bsdus na /
> rnam pa gnyis su shes bya ste /
> byang chub smon pa'i sems dang ni /
> byang chub 'jug pa nyid yin no /

[250] dbye-sgo gzhan-yang / gcig-nas-drug-gi-bar dang / sa-mtshams kyis yum-mdo ltar-na nyer-gnyis dang / blo-gros-rgya-mtshos-zhus-mdo ltar-na mi-zad-pa-brgyad-cu la-sogs-pa'i sgo-nas **byang-chub**-kyi-**sems de** la dbye-na mang-por-'gyur-yang[1220] **mdor-bsdu-na** dbye-ba'i grangs ngo-bo'i sgo-nas **rnam-pa-gnyis su shes**-par-**bya-ste** / gang zhe-na / **byang-chub**-mchog-tu **smon-pa'i-sems**-bskyed **dang ni** / **byang-chub**-kyi-spyod-pa la '**jug-pa**-yi-sems-bskyed-pa **nyid yin-no**[1221] //

> inserted root text: stanza 16
>
> 'gro bar 'dod dang 'gro ba yi /
> bye brag ji ltar shes pa ltar /
> de bzhin mkhas pas 'di gnyis kyi /
> bye brag rim bzhin shes par bya /

[251] de-gnyis kyi khyad-par ji-ltar yin-na / dper-na skyes-bu zhig 'dod-pa'i yul du **'gro-bar 'dod**-cing don-du-gnyer-bar-bya-ba **dang** / de'i lam-du[1222] dngos-su zhugs-nas **'gro-ba yi bye-brag** gam khyad-par **ji-ltar** yod-pa **shes-pa ltar de-bzhin**-du **mkhas-pas** ste mkhas-pa byang-chub-sems-dpa'-rnams-kyis smon-pa dang 'jug-pa'i-sems **'di gnyis kyi bye-brag** kyang go-**rim** ji-lta-ba-**bzhin**-du **shes-par-bya** zhes /

[252] dpe'i sgo-nas bstan-par-mdzad-pa'i smon-'jug-gi khyad-par 'di la bzhed-pa mi-'dra-ba mang-du snang-ste / slob-dpon ye-shes-zhabs sogs-kyis so-so'i-skye-bo'i-sems-bskyed smon-pa dang / 'phags-pa'i-sems-bskyed la 'jug-par bzhed-pa dang /

[1220] B: mang po 'gyur yang

[1221] B: 'jug pa nyid yin no

[1222] B: de lam du

> inserted root text: stanza 15
>
> In brief, this bodhicitta
> Should be understood to have two aspects:
> The mind that aspires to enlightenment,
> And (the mind) that enters into (the conduct of) enlightenment.

[250] Furthermore, **this bodhicitta** can be differentiated by the first through the sixth (of the transcendental perfections); or, according to the *Mother-sūtra*,[1223] by the distinctions of the stages (of bodhicitta development) aligned with the twenty-two (similes); and, according to the *Sāgarmati-paripṛcchā-sūtra*, it can be differentiated by the eighty unceasing factors. Although many (types of distinctions) can be made, **in brief**, (bodhicitta) **should be understood to have two aspects**, which are the essence of (all) these numerous distinctions. What are these (two)? (They are) **the mind that aspires to** supreme **enlightenment and** the mind **that enters into** the conduct of **enlightenment**.

> inserted root text: stanza 16
>
> Just as one understands the distinction between
> Aspiring to go and (actually) going,
> In the same way the wise ones should understand
> The distinction between these two in their progressive order.

[251] How are these two distinguished? For example, **just as one understands** what is **the distinction** or difference between a person wishing or **aspiring to go** to a desired location **and** (a person) actually entering upon that path and **going**, **in the same way**, **the wise ones**, meaning the wise bodhisattvas, **should understand** also **the distinction between these two**, the bodhicitta of aspiration and of application, in **their progressive order**.

[252] Concerning this distinction between (the bodhicitta of) aspiration and (that) of application, which is taught through example, many different interpretations appear. Master Jñānapāda states that ordinary peoples' development of bodhicitta is (the bodhicitta of) aspiration and that the development of bodhicitta by noble beings is (the bodhicitta of) application.

1223 Mother-sūtra [yum mdo] is a general Tibetan term for the Prajñāpāramitā literature. But here it particularly refers to Asaṅga's *Abhisamayālaṃkāra* [mngon rtogs rgyan].

[253] a-bhā-ya dang ye-shes-grags-pa la-sogs-pas tshogs-lam-pa'i sems-bskyed la smon-pa dang / sbyor-lam nas 'jug-sems su bzhed /

[254] shanti-pa / rin-chen-'byung-gnas / rgya-mtsho'i-sprin sogs-kyis byang-chub-thob-'dod-kyi-blo de cho-gas-ma-blangs-pa smon-pa dang / blangs-pa la 'jug-sems dang /

[255] shes-rab-'byung-gnas sogs sems de byang-chub-spyod-pas ma zin-pa dang / zin-pa la dang / jo-bo-chen-pos / 'bras-bu sangs-rgyas la dmigs-pa smon-pa dang / rgyu lam la dmigs-pa 'jug-par bzhed-de / rgyu-'bras la dam-bca'-ba'i khyad-par-du bzhed-pa dang gcig-go /

[256] kha-cig phyir-mi-ldog ma-thob-kyi-bar smon-pa dang / thob-nas 'jug-par 'dod-pa sogs las skye-'phags-kyi-sems-bskyed la / 'dod-pa-tsam ma-gtogs gzhan phal-cher zhi-ba-lha'i lung 'di'i rjes-su-'brang bar 'dra-yang dgongs-pa-len-tshul mi-'dra-zhing /

[257] kun-mkhyen-chen-pos ni / 'bras-bu la dam-bca'-ba smon-sems dang rgyu la dam-bca'-ba 'jug-sems su gsungs-shing / de-yang /

> dpe grogs kyis dbye-ba rnams la yang //
> bsam-pas smon dang sbyor-bas khyab //

zhes smon-'jug gnyis-rer gsungs-pa bzhin

[258] mdor-na ma-gyur nam-mkha'i-mtha'-dang-mnyam-pa'i sems-can thams-cad srid-zhi'i sdug-bsngal thams-cad dang bral-te yang-dag-par-rdzogs-pa'i-sangs-rgyas-kyi go-'phang la bdag-gis 'god-par-bya'o zhes /

[259] 'bras-bu sangs-rgyas-kyi go-'phang nyid-du 'gro-bar-'dod-cing don-du-gnyer-nas sgrub-par dam-bca'-ba don-gnyis sam zur-gnyis dang ldan-pa'i smon-pa'i-sems-bskyed dang /

[253] Abhaya,[1224] Jñānakīrti and others state that the development of bodhicitta of someone who is on the path of accumulation is (the bodhicitta of) aspiration, and that (development of bodhicitta) from the path of application onwards is (the bodhicitta of) application.

[254] Śāntipa, Ratnakara, Sāgaramegha and others state that a mind aspiring to reach enlightenment without having received (the bodhisattva vow) through a ceremony is (the bodhicitta of) aspiration and that when (the vows are) received (through a ceremony), it is (the bodhicitta of) application.

[255] Prajñākaramati and others state that the difference is whether or not the mind engages in the conduct of enlightenment. Lord Atiśa states that focusing on the fruition, on buddhahood, is (the bodhicitta of) aspiration, while focusing on the cause (for enlightenment), the path, is (the bodhicitta of) application. This is identical with the statement which (indicates that) the difference lies between committing to the cause and committing to the fruition.

[256] Some state that as long as one has not yet reached the (stage of a) non-returner, it is (still the bodhicitta of) aspiration; once attained, it is (the bodhicitta of) application. These (statements) are nothing other than comments about the development of bodhicitta by ordinary beings and by noble beings. Almost all other (teachers) follow Śāntideva's teaching (of stanza 16), but they differ in their manner of interpretation.

[257] The Great Omniscient One (Longchen Rabjam) said, "Committing to the fruition is the bodhicitta of aspiration, and committing to the cause is the bodhicitta of application." Furthermore:

> All distinctions made through similes and through supporting factors
> Come down to bodhicitta of aspiration and application.

This refers to both, (the bodhicitta) of aspiration and of application.

[258] In short (the bodhicitta of aspiration is): "I will free all mother-like sentient beings, equal to the reaches of space, from all suffering of existence and peace and will establish them on the level of complete and perfect buddhahood."

[259] Thus, aspiring to progress to the fruition, which is the level of buddhahood, pursuing that aim and being committed to accomplish it—that is the development of the bodhicitta of aspiration, endowed with the two benefits or the two aspects.

1224 For biographical notes on Abhaya or Ācārya Abhayākaragupta [slob dpon 'jigs med 'byung gnas sbab pa] see *Tāranātha's History of Buddhism*, pages 313-315.

[260] de'i-ched-du rgyu lam pha-rol-tu-phyin-pa-drug[1225] sgrub-par dam-bca'-zhing bcas-pa bzhin-du zhugs-nas bsgrub bzhin-pa 'jug-pa-sems-bskyed de 'gro-ba'i tshe yang 'gro-'dod mi-'dor-ba bzhin-du 'jug-sems kyi dus-na'ang smon-sems yod dgos la /

[261] de-lta-na byang-chub-kyi-sems-gnyis dang / tshul-khrims-gsum dang / sdom-pa zhes ldog-pa'i sgo-nas dbye-yang ngo-bo gcig-ste / gzhan-don-du rdzogs-pa'i-byang-chub 'dod-nas dge-ba-spyod-pa smon-'jug gnyis dang / des rang-rgyud-sdom-pa dang / dge-tshogs-spel-ba dang / gzhan-don-byed-pas tshul-khrims-gsum dang / de thams-cad kyis rang-rgyud kyi mi-dge-ba cha-dang-bcas-pa sdom-pas byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-sdom-pa zhes-bya ste /

[262] dper-na nor-bu-rin-po-che la rims-nad sel-ba dang / dgos-'dod-'byung-ba dang / mun-pa sel-ba'i cha-gsum yod-pa ltar ngo-bo gcig la sdog-pa tha-dad-du gsungs //

> inserted root text: stanza 17
>
> byang chub smon pa'i sems las ni /
> 'khor tshe 'bras bu che 'byung yang /
> ji ltar 'jug pa'i sems bzhin du /
> bsod nams rgyun chags 'byung ba min /

[263] gnyis-pa ni / de-ltar **byang-chub**-tu **smon-pa'i-sems**-bskyed-pa tsam **las ni** 'khor-ba 'dir '**khor-tshe** lha'i-rgyal-po tshangs-dbang sogs dang mi'i 'khor-los-bsgyur-ba'i-rgyal-po sogs-kyi dbang-phyug phun-sum-tshogs-pa'i **'bras-bu** rgya-**che**-ba[1226] **'byung-yang ji-ltar 'jug-pa'i-sems**-bskyed-pa **bzhin-du bsod-nams** sam sbyin-pa dang tshul-khrims la-sogs-pa'i dge-ba **rgyun-chags**-te bar-ma-chad-du **'byung-ba min**-la /

[1225] A: pha rol du phyin pa drug

[1226] C: gya che ba

[260] (In short), bodhicitta of application is developed (in the following way): "With this aim I commit to practice the six transcendental perfections, the cause (of) and the path (to enlightenment). While keeping (this commitment), I will enter (into the path) and practice." Just as one should not lose the wish to go while (one is actually) going, in the same way, the bodhicitta of aspiration must be present at the time of the bodhicitta of application.

[261] The distinctions by means of aspects—such as 'the two kinds of bodhicitta', 'the three disciplines', and 'the precepts'—are in essence identical. To practice virtue while aspiring to perfect enlightenment for the benefit of others is (the bodhicitta of) aspiration and application. Thus, safeguarding one's own mind (by precepts), increasing the accumulation of virtue, and acting for the benefit of others are the three disciplines. Through all of these, this safeguarding of one's mind against non-virtue and (all) its aspects is what is known as 'the precepts of the bodhisattvas'.

[262] (Thus, these terms) are said to be identical in essence while denoting different aspects. Like, for example, the precious jewel with three aspects, (bodhicitta) eradicates infectious diseases, grants (all) wishes and needs, and dispels darkness.

Differentiating their benefits

> inserted root text: stanza 17
>
> From the bodhicitta of aspiration,
> Great fruits arise while still circling (in saṃsāra),
> And yet, it does not have the unceasing stream of merit
> As does the bodhicitta of application.

[263] Second, **v**ast and **great fruits** of perfect glory, such as those of Brahma and Īśvara,[1227] the kings of the gods, and those of a universal sovereign of human beings, **arise from** merely developing **the bodhicitta of aspiration while still circling** in this saṃsāra. **And yet**, **it does not have** the **unceasing** and uninterrupted **stream of merit** or virtues such as generosity, discipline, and others, **as does** the development of **the bodhicitta of application**.

[1227] An epithet for Indra.

> inserted root text: stanza 18
>
> gang nas bzung ste sems can khams /
> mtha' yas rab tu sgrol ba'i phyir /
> mi ldog pa yi sems kyis su /
> sems de yang dag blangs gyur pa /

[264] dus-**gang-nas-bzung-ste** ched-du-bya-ba **sems-can**-gyi-**khams-mtha'-yas** shing mu-med-pa srid-zhi'i sdug-bsngal las **rab-tu-dgrol-ba**'am bsgral-te sangs-rgyas-thob-pa**'i phyir**-du phyin-drug la spyod-par dam-bca'-ba'i dam-bca' de las phyir-**mi-ldog** snyam-**pa yi sems-kyis su** 'jug-pa'i-**sems de yang-dag**-par **blangs**-te ma-nyams-par bsrung-bar-**gyur-pa** ste

> inserted root text: stanza 19
>
> de nas bzung ste gnyid log gam /
> bag med gyur kyang bsod nams shugs /
> rgyun mi 'chad par du ma zhig /
> nam mkha' mnyam par rab tu 'byung /

[265] bsrung-bar-byas-na dus-**de-nas-bzung-te** gang-zag de **gnyid-log gam** rtsed-mo sogs **bag-med**-par-**gyur-kyang** sbyin sogs **bsod-nams** kyi **shugs** gong-nas-gong-du **rgyun-mi-'chad-par** rgya-che-zhing zad-mi-shes-pa **du-ma zhig nam-mkha'**-dang-**mnyam-par**[1228] tshad-bzung-du-med-pa **rab-tu-'byung** ngo //

[266] de-lta-na'ang 'jug-sdom-blangs-nas sbyin sogs la dus-dang-dus-su cung-zad-cung-zad-tsam-du'ang[1229] mi-sbyor-na dge-ba mi 'phel-bar[1230] ma-zad dge-ba la mi-sbyor-ba'i rtsa-ltung-gi-nyes-pa chen-po 'byung-bar gsungs /

[267] gsum-pa lung-rigs kyi sgo-nas bsgrub-pa la / lung gi sgo-nas bsgrub-pa dang / rigs-pa'i sgo-nas bsgrub-pa gnyis las /

1228 A, B: myam pa

1229 B: zung cad tsam du'ang

1230 A: phel par; B: phel ba

> inserted root text: stanza 18
>
> From the point of time
> When one has genuinely adopted this bodhicitta,
> In order to free infinite realms of beings
> With resolve from which one does not turn away,

[264] **From the point of time when one has genuinely adopted this bodhicitta** of application **with resolve,** thinking, "**In order to free** and liberate **infinite** and boundless **realms of** sentient **beings**, the object of my intention, from the suffering of existence and peace, and (cause them) to achieve buddhahood, **I will not turn away** from my commitment but will enact the six transcendental perfections." Thus, I will maintain (bodhicitta) without letting it deteriorate.

> inserted root text: stanza 19
>
> From that moment on,
> Even while asleep or inattentive,
> An uninterrupted and multifarious force of merit
> Arises, equal to the sky.

[265] If one maintains (this resolve), **from that moment on**, for that person, **even while asleep or inattentive** due to playing and the like, **an** ever-increasing, **uninterrupted**, vast, inexhaustible, and **multifarious force of merit** (which comes from practicing) generosity and the like, **arises**, immeasurable and **equal to the sky**.

[266] Having thus taken the precept of (the bodhicitta of) application, if one does not enact, from time to time, a minimum degree of generosity and so forth, one's virtue will not increase. Not only that, but it is said that one has thereby committed the grave fault of the major downfall of (intentionally) not engaging in virtue.

Establishing (the benefits of bodhicitta) by means of scriptures and reasoning

[267] Third, establishing (the benefits of bodhicitta) by means of scriptures and reasoning has two points: (1) establishing (the benefits of bodhicitta) by means of scriptures, and (2) establishing (the benefits of bodhicitta) by means of reasoning.

inserted root text: stanza 20

'di ni 'thad pa dang bcas par /
lag bzangs kyis ni zhus pa las /
dman mos sems can don gyi phyir /
de bzhin gshegs pa nyid kyis gsungs /

[268] dang-po ni / 'jug-sdom-thob-cing ma-nymas-pa la phan-yon de-ltar yod-pa '**di-ni** / dmigs-yul sems-can gyi grangs dang / bsal-bya sdug-bsngal gyi rnam-grangs dang / thob-bya sangs-rgyas kyi yon-tan dang / dus bskal-pa'i-yun gang la bsam-kyang dpag-tu-med-pa'i phyir-na '**thad-pa**-bzhi **dang bcas-par** byang-chub-sems-dpa' **lag-bzangs-kyis-ni-zhus-pa**-yi-mdo[1231] **las dman**-pa nyan-rang-gi-lam la **mos**-pa'i **sems-can** gang-zhig kha-drang-ba'i-don tsam ma-yin-par de-dag-gis byang-chub-sems-kyi[1232] yon-tan dang phan-yon nges-pa la nges-par mthong zhing shes-pa'i **don gyi phyir de-bzhin-gshegs-pa-nyid-kyis gsungs**-te /

[269] de las / bdag-ni sems-can-gyi tshogs mtha'-yas-pa de la phan-pa dang bde-ba'i phyir go-bgos-na sems-can thams-cad la phan-pa dang bde-bar dmigs-pa mtha'-yas-pa'i dge-ba'i-rtsa-ba mtha'-yas-pa dag bag-med-par-gyur-tam / gnyid-kyis-log-kyang nyin-mtshan-du sems-kyi-skad-cig la 'phel-ba dang / rgyas-par dang yongs-su-rdzogs-par-'gyur-te / zhes gsungs-so //

[270] gnyis-pa rigs-pa'i sgo-nas bsgrub-pa[1233] la / smon-sems kyi phan-yon rigs-pa'i sgo-nas bsgrub-pa dang / 'jug-sems kyi phan-yon rigs-pa'i sgo-nas bsgrub-pa gnyis las /

1231 B: zhus pa'i mdo
1232 A, C: kyis
1233 A, C: sgrub pa

Establishing (the benefits of bodhicitta) by means of scriptures

> inserted root text: stanza 20
>
> This (presence of benefits) together with (four) reasons
> Is what the Tathāgata himself explained
> In (the sūtra) requested by Subāhu[1234]
> For the benefit of those inclined toward the lesser (paths).

[268] First, **this** presence of such benefits in those who have received the precepts (of the bodhicitta) of application and who do not let them deteriorate is unfathomable, no matter how one reflects upon it: (1) in regard to the number of sentient beings, who are the objects of focus; (2) in regard to the amount of suffering, that which is to be dispelled; (3) in regard to the qualities of buddhahood, those which are to be obtained; and (4) in regard to the duration of aeons, the time-span. Therefore, that **is what the Tathāgata himself explained**, **together with** these four **reasons**, **in** the sūtra **requested by** the Bodhisattva **Subāhu**,[1235] not only for the mere purpose of guiding **those beings inclined toward the lesser** paths, (such as) the paths of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, but **for the benefit** of enabling them to truly see and understand the definite qualities and benefits of bodhicitta.

[269] In this (*Subāhu-paripṛcchā-sūtra* it is said): "If I, (the bodhisattva), don the armor (of courage) in order to bring benefit and happiness to boundless masses of sentient beings, I thus have boundless thoughts that bring benefit and happiness to all sentient beings. Consequently, the roots of virtue are also boundless. Even if I should be inattentive or fall asleep, still (these roots of virtue) will day and night, from moment to moment, increase, expand, and become utterly perfected."

Establishing (the benefits of bodhicitta) by means of reasoning

[270] Second, establishing (the benefits of bodhicitta) by means of reasoning has two points: (1) establishing the benefits of the bodhicitta of aspiration by means of reasoning, and (2) establishing the benefits of the bodhicitta of application by means of reasoning.

1234 See *Subāhu-paripṛcchā-sūtra.*

1235 See *Subāhu-paripṛcchā-sūtra.*

[271] dang-po ni / de la rgyu-'bras-kyi-rnam-bzhag ni shes-bya shin-tu lkog-gyur yin-pas thams-cad-mkhyen-pa sangs-rgyas kho-na'i spyod-yul las gzhan gyi spyod-yul ma-yin-pas-na rgyal-ba'i bka'-lung rnam-dag la yid-ches-kyis blang-dor-bya-ba las rigs-pas 'thad-pa sgrub-tu-med-na'ang[1236] byang-chub-sems kyi phan-yon ni shin-tu rgya-che-zhing rgyal-bas-kyang yang-yang bsngags-par-mdzad-pas-na rigs-pas kyang bsgrub-na'ang 'grub-par-'gyur-ba yin-pas-na rigs-pas bsgrub-par-mdzad-pa ste /

[272] sngon khyim-bdag mdza'-bo'i-bu bu-mo zhes[1237] rgya-mtshor nor-bu-len-du 'gro tshe mas gos-kyi-mtha'-nas-bzung-ste ngus-pas nga-rang rgya-mtshor 'gro-ba la khyod-kyis bkra-mi-shis-pa-byas-te ngu-bar-zer-nas mgo la rdog-pas-bsnun-nas song-bas rgya-mtshor gru-gzings zhig-tshe khos shing-leb-cig la 'jus-pas mtsho-gling-zhig tu thon-te /

[273] dga'-ba'i-grong sogs rim-par bgrod-nas mthar mgo la lcags-kyi 'khor-lo-'khor-nas sdug-bsngal bzod-dka'-ba byung-bas de'i-rkyen-gyis snying-rje skyes-te ma'i mgo[1238] la rdog-pa-bsnun-pa'i 'bras-bu-myong-ba-rnams[1239] kyi sdug-bsngal bdag la smin-nas de-dag-gis mi-myong-bar-shog-cig bsam-ma-thag-tu[1240] sdug-bsngal las grol-nas ta-la-bdun srid-du bde-cham-mer-'dug-pa tshe-'phos-nas lhar-skyes-so //

> inserted root text: stanza 21
>
> sems can rnams kyi klad nad tsam /
> bsal lo snyam du bsam na yang /
> phan 'dogs bsam pa dang ldan te /
> bsod nams dpag med ldan gyur na /

[1236] B: bsgrub tu med na'ang
[1237] C: mdza' bo'i bu mo zhes
[1238] B: de'i rkyen gyis ma'i mgo
[1239] C: myong pa rnams
[1240] B: shog cig ces bsam ma thag tu

Establishing the benefits of the bodhicitta of aspiration by means of reasoning

[271] First, since the distinctions of cause and fruition are a most hidden field of knowledge,[1241] they are, consequently, the domain of the omniscient Buddha alone and not the domain of anyone else. Therefore, other than trusting in the genuine words of the Victor and observing what should be done and what should be avoided, (the law of karma) cannot (easily) be established logically by means of reasoning. Since the benefits of bodhicitta are extremely vast, however, and because they were repeatedly praised by the Victor, it should be possible to establish them with reasoning. Therefore, I will (try to) logically establish (the benefits of bodhicitta by telling stories of Buddha's previous lives as a bodhisattva):

[272] In former times, when the son of the householder Maitra, (whose name was) Kanyaka, was about to go to sea to collect precious gems, his mother (tried to prevent him from going) by clinging to the hem of his garment and weeping. He shouted, "You have brought me bad luck for my journey across the ocean!" He kicked her head with his foot and departed. His ship was wrecked at sea, but he held fast to a plank and was washed ashore onto an island.

[273] He travelled successively to the city called 'Joy' and others until finally he experienced unbearable suffering when an iron wheel (descended and) spun on his head. This caused him to develop compassion, as he thought, "May all the suffering of those who experience the fruition of having kicked their mothers in the head ripen on me. May none of them experience (such suffering again)." Immediately his agony ceased, and he soared up to the height of seven palm trees in a state of bliss. After he died, he was reborn in the god (realm).[1242]

> inserted root text: stanza 21
>
> If a person with a helpful intention
> Thinks, "I shall merely relieve
> The headaches of (a few) beings,"
> (And this thought) is (already) endowed with boundless merit,

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[1241] 'Most hidden', 'radically inaccessible', radically imperceptible [shin tu lkog gyur; skr. atyanta-parokṣa].

[1242] See *rtogs brjod rtsa 'grel*, pages 625-627; *Heaven Tree*, pages 407-410; and *Maitrakanyakāvadāna*.

[274] de-ltar snying-rje'i-sems kyis **sems-can** nyung-zad **rnams kyi klad-nad tsam** sman la-sogs-pas **bsal-lo snyam-du-bsam**-nas sbyor-bas bsal-bar ma byas-**na-yang** de la **phan-'dogs**-par 'dod-pa'i **bsam-pa dang ldan**-pas-**te** / de la **bsod-nams dpag**-tu-**med**-pa dang **ldan**-pa **'gyur-na** byang-chub-sems-dpa'-rnams-kyis

> inserted root text: stanza 22
>
> sems can re re'i mi bde ba /
> dpag tu med pa bsal 'dod cing /
> re re'ang yon tan dpag med du /
> bsgrub par 'dod pa smos ci dgos /

[275] nam-mkha'-dang-mnyam-pa'i-**sems-can** thams-cad la **re-re'i** ste rang-rang so-so bzhin-du 'di-phyi'i sdug-bsngal lam **mi-bde-ba dpag-tu-med-pa** mtha'-dag ma-lus-par **bsal**-bar **'dod-cing** / de-dag **re-re la'ang** gnas-skabs dang mthar-thug gi **yon-tan dpag**-tu-**med**-pa dang ldan-pa nyid-**du bsgrub-par-'dod-pa** la bsod-nams dpag-tu-med-pa dang ldan-par 'gyur-ba lta-**smos**-kyang-**ci-dgos**-so //

> inserted root text: stanza 23
>
> pha 'am yang na ma yang rung /
> su la 'di 'dra'i phan sems yod /
> lha dang drang srong rnams kyang rung /
> tshangs pa la yang 'di yod dam /

[276] bsam-pa bzang-ba'i tshul yang 'jig-rten na bsam-pa bzang-bar grags-pa[1243] **pha 'am yang-na ma yang rung** ste de-dag-gis rang-rang gi bu 'di tshe-ring-zhing nad-med-par btsan-phyug mnga'-thang sogs che-na ci-ma-rung snyam-pa las byang-chub-sems-dpa' min-pa **su la** 'dis sangs-rgyas-kyi go-'phang thob-na ci-ma-rung snyam-pa'i byang-chub-kyi-sems **'di-'dra'i phan-sems yod**-de med-do //

[277] de-dag-gis mi shes-pas lan-no snyam-na mngon-shes-lnga dang ldan-pa'i **lha dang** rig-pa'i-gnas-chen-bco-brgyad[1244] shes-pa'i **drang-srong rnams kyang rung** ste de-'dra'i bsam-pa med-la /

[1243] B: 'jig rten na bzang bar grags pa

[1244] A, B, C: rigs pa'i gnas chen bco brgyad

[274] **If a person with an intention** of wishing to be **helpful thinks** with such a compassionate mind (as the son of Maitra), "**I shall merely relieve the headaches of** a few **beings** through medicine and the like," although he does not even (actually) dispel them through application, (still this thought) **is** (already) **endowed with boundless merit**,

> inserted root text: stanza 22
>
> Then it is needless to mention that
> Wishing to dispel the boundless misery of every single being,
> And wishing for each of them
> To accomplish boundless qualities (also carries boundless merit).

[275] **then it is needless to mention** that the bodhisattvas' **wishing to dispel** all **the boundless** suffering and **misery** of this and future lives—for **every single** one, meaning each individually, for all **beings** equal to the extent of space—and their **wishing to accomplish for each of them the boundless qualities**, (both) temporary and ultimate, is (also) endowed with boundless merit.

> inserted root text: stanza 23
>
> Do even fathers and mothers
> Have such a benefiting intention?
> Do the gods and sages
> Or even Brahma have it?

[276] **Do even fathers and mothers**—whose good intentions are renowned as being the most noble intentions in this world, and who, unlike the bodhisattvas, think, "Wouldn't it be nice for our own child to have a long life, be free from diseases, and have great power, riches, authority, and the like?"—**have such a benefiting intention** of bodhicitta, thinking, "Wouldn't it be nice if they could reach the level of buddhahood?" No, they do not.

[277] If you think, "Well, (fathers and mothers) just do not know about (bodhicitta)," then **even the gods,** who are endowed with the five (worldly) supernatural perceptions, **and the sages**, who know the eighteen great fields of knowledge, do not have such an intention either.

[278] de-dag-la phan-sems-med-pas mi-'byung-ngo snyam-na / tshangs-pas rang-gi mnga'-ris rnams bde-ba dang ldan 'dod dang / sdug-bsngal dang bral 'dod sogs tshangs-pa'i-gnas-pa-bzhi dang ldan-pa'i **tshangs-pa la yang** de-dag sangs-rgyas thob 'dod kyi byang-chub-kyi-sems '**di yod-dam** de[1245] med-do //

> inserted root text: stanza 24
>
> sems can de dag nyid la sngon /
> rang gi don du 'di 'dra'i sems /
> rmi lam du yang ma rmis na /
> gzhan gyi don du ga la skye /

[279] pha dang ma lha dang drang-srong tshangs-pa[1246] la-sogs-pa'i **sems-can de-dag-nyid la sngon**-chad **rang-gi don-du**-yang sangs-rgyas thob 'dod '**di-'dra'i sems** khyad-par-can tha-na gang ci-yang rmi-ba'i **rmi-lam-du yang ma-rmis**-shing skye-ma-myong-**na** sems-can **gzhan-gyi-don-du** dngos-su **ga-la skye**-ste skye mi-rigs-so //

> inserted root text: stanza 25
>
> gzhan dag rang gi don du yang /
> mi 'byung sems can don sems gang /
> sems kyi rin chen khyad par 'di /
> snga na med pa'i rmad cig 'khrungs /

[280] lha sogs **gzhan-dag** gzhan-don-du lta-ci **rang-gi don-du yang mi 'byung**-rgyu'i **sems-can** thams-cad kyi **don** sems-pa'i byang-chub-kyi-**sems gang**-yin-pa 'di-ni **sems-kyi-rin-chen** ste rnam-rtog gi nang-nas rin-po-che lta-bu'i rnam-rtog **khyad-par**-du-'phags-pa '**di**-nyid rang-rgyud la **snga-na-med-pa'i** ste sngar-skye-ma-myong-ba'i ngo-mtshar-**rmad-cig** ste rmad-du-byung-ba-zhig da-res theg-chen-gyi-chos thos-pa dang / dge-ba'i-bshes-gnyen gyi mthus rang-rgyud la '**khrungs**-pa 'di-ni lha-yul dpag-bsam-gyi-ljon-pa 'jig-rten mi-yul na[1247] skyes-pa lta-bu'o //

1245 B: yod dam ste

1246 B: pha dang ma dang tshangs pa

1247 B: mi yul du

[278] If you think, "These (gods and sages) don't have (bodhicitta) because they lack a benefiting intention," then (understand that the god) **Brahma** possesses the four Brahma states, and since Brahma wishes his own subjects to have happiness, he wishes them to be free from suffering and so forth. **Do** (these gods and sages) **have this** bodhicitta of wishing (all beings) to attain buddhahood**?** No, they do not.

> inserted root text: stanza 24
>
> If those beings have never before
> Even dreamed of such an intention
> (To attain buddhahood) for their own sake,
> How could it ever arise for the sake of others?

[279] **If those beings**, like fathers, mothers, gods, sages, Brahma, and others, **never before even dreamed of** or experienced in any of their dreams the dawn of **such a** special **intention** of wishing to attain buddhahood **for their own sake**, **how could it** actually **ever arise for the sake of other** sentient being**s**? It is not possible.

> inserted root text: stanza 25
>
> (The fact) that this most (exalted) jewel of the mind,
> This intention to benefit (all) beings,
> Which does not arise in others even for their own sake,
> Has (now) taken birth (in my mind) is an unprecedented wonder.

[280] (The fact) **that this most** exalted thought, which is like a jewel among thoughts, this **jewel of the mind**, **this** bodhicitta of **intention**, which aims **to benefit** all **beings**, and **which does not even arise in others**, such as gods and so forth, **for their own sake**, much less for the sake of others, **has** (nonetheless) now **taken birth** in my mind through the power of studying the Mahāyāna teachings and through the power of a spiritual guide, is an astounding **wonder**, in other words, (that it is) something amazing, **unprecedented** in my mind, meaning that it was not born there before. It is as if the wish-granting tree of the god realm had taken birth in the world of the human realm.

> inserted root text: stanza 26
>
> 'gro ba kun gyi dga' ba'i rgyu /
> sems can sdug bsngal rtsir gyur pa /
> rin chen sems kyi bsod nams gang /
> de la ji ltar gzhal gyis lang /

[281] de-ni mtha'-yas-pa'i **'gro-ba kun gyi** gnas-skabs dang mthar-thug gi **dga'**-bde ma-lus-pa 'byung-**ba'i rgyu** dang / **sems-can** thams-cad kyi **sdug-bsngal** gyi nad ma-lus-pa sel-ba'i sman chen-po'am **rtsir-gyur-pa** yi **rin-chen** byang-chub-**sems kyi bsod-nams** sam phan-yon **gang**-yin-pa **de la** 'di-tsam zhes tshad-kyi **ji-ltar gzhal-gyis-lang** ste

[282] nam-mkha'i-mtha' dang sems-can gyi grangs dang sdug-bsngal gyi rnam-grangs / sangs-rgyas kyi yon-tan rnams gzhal-gyis-mi-lang-ba'i phyir-ro // des-na dpas-byin-gyis-zhus-pa[1248] las //

> byang-chub-sems kyi bsod-nams gang //
> gal-te de la gzugs mchis-na //
> nam-mkha'i-khams ni kun gang-ste //
> de-bas-kyang ni lhag-par-'gyur //

zhes gsungs-so //

[283] gnyis-pa ni / ting-'dzin-rgyal-po las /

> bye-ba-khrag-khrig gtam-pa'i[1249] zhing-dag na //
> mchod-pa rnam-mang dpag-med ci-yod-pa //
> skyes-mchog-rnams la nyin-rer rtag mchod-pas //
> byams-pa'i-sems la grangs dang char-mi-phod //

ces gsungs-pa ltar /

> inserted root text: stanza 27
>
> phan par bsams pa tsam gyis kyang /
> sangs rgyas mchod las khyad 'phags na /
> sems can ma lus thams cad kyi /
> bde don brtson pa smos ci dgos /

[1248] A, B: dpal byin gyis zhus pa
[1249] B: gtams pa'i

> inserted root text: stanza 26
>
> It is the source of happiness for all beings.
> It is the panacea for all the suffering of beings.
> The totality of merit of this precious intention—
> How can it be fathomed?

[281] **It is the source** that gives rise to all temporary and ultimate **happiness for all** boundless **beings**. **It is the panacea**, the great medicine that dispels all the illness of **suffering of** all **beings**. **The totality of merit** or benefit of this **precious intention,** this bodhicitta**—how can it** be **fathomed** in measures, to say, "It is this much"?

[282] The reaches of space, the number of sentient beings, the amount of suffering, and the qualities of the Buddha cannot be fathomed. Therefore, from the *Vīradatta-gṛhapati-paripṛcchā-sūtra*:

> If all the merit of bodhicitta
> Were to take a physical form,
> It would fill the entire realm of space
> And would be greater even than that.

Establishing the benefits of the bodhicitta of application by means of reasoning

[283] Second, from the *Samādhi-rāja-sūtra*:

> Even when offering constantly, every day,
> All the boundless myriads of offerings that exist
> In the millions and billions of buddha fields to the supreme beings,
> The amount (of this merit) does not match that of a loving mind.

> inserted root text: stanza 27
>
> If a mere benefiting intention
> Surpasses presenting offerings to the buddhas,
> Then how much more so does striving for the sake of
> The happiness of all beings without excluding any?

[284] byams-pa'i-sems-kyis sems-can la bde-ba dang ldan 'dod kyi **phan-par bsams-pa**[1250] **tsam-gyis kyang** rin-po-che-sna-bdun la-sogs-pas **sangs-rgyas** bcom-ldan-'das-rnams la **mchod**-pa-byas-pa **las khyad**-par-du-'**phags**-par-'gyur-**na** / nam-mkha'-dang-mnyam-pa'i-**sems-can ma-lus**-pa **thams-cad kyi bde-don** ste[1251] sangs-rgyas-kyi go-'phang 'thob-pa'i ched-du sbyin sogs phyin-drug la dngos-su-sbyor-bas[1252] **brtson-pa** ni sangs-rgyas mchod las khyad-par-du-'phags-pa **smos-ci-dgos** so //

> inserted rooot text: stanza 28
>
> sdug bsngal 'dor 'dod sems yod kyang /
> sdug bsngal nyid la mngon par rgyug /
> bde ba 'dod kyang gti mug pas /
> rang gi bde ba dgra ltar 'joms /

[285] sems-can thams-cad tshe-thung-ba nad-mang-ba longs-spyod med-pa la-sogs-pa'i 'di-phyi'i **bsdug-bsngal** mi 'dod-pas '**dor**-ba '**dod**-pa'i **sems-yod-kyang** / zhe-'dod dang lag-len phyin-ci-log-tu-gyur-nas srog-gcod-pa / ma-byin-pa-len-pa sogs mi-dge-ba-bcu dang-du-blangs-nas 'di-phyi'i **sdug-bsngal-nyid la** phye-ma-sleb mar-me la mchongs-pa bzhin **mngon-par-rgyug**-cing /

[286] de-bzhin-du tshe-ring-ba nad-med-pa la-sogs-pa'i 'di-phyi'i **bde-ba 'dod-kyang** de'i thabs blang-dor-la rmongs-shing **gti-mug-pas** dge-bcu mi sgrub-par ma-zad mi-dge-ba sna-tshogs byas-te **rang-gi** 'di-phyi'i **bde-ba dgra**-bo mthong-ba **ltar 'joms**-par-byed-do //

> inserted root text: stanza 29
>
> gang zhig bde bas phongs pa dang /
> sdug bsngal mang ldan de dag la /
> bde ba kun gyis tshim pa dang /
> sdug bsngal thams cad gcod byed cing /

[287] des-na sems-can **gang-zhig** rgyu dang bcas-pa'i **bde-bas-phongs**-shing dbul-**ba dang** / **sdug-bsngal** rgyu-'bras **mang**-po dang **ldan** zhing nyams-thag-pa **de-dag la** / byams-pa chen-po'i sgo-nas gnas-skabs dang mthar-thug gi **bde-ba kun gyis tshim**-par-byed-**pa dang** / snying-rje chen-po'i sgo-nas 'di-phyi'i **sdug-bsngal thams-cad** rgyun-**gcod**-par-**byed-cing** /

[1250] A, B: bsam

[1251] B: ste

[1252] B: dngos su sbyor pa

[284] **If a mere benefiting intention**—wishing with a mind of kindness that (all) beings be endowed with happiness—**surpasses presenting offerings**, such as the seven precious substances and the like, **to the buddhas**, the bhagavāns, **then how much more so** will **striving** to actually train in the six perfections—such as generosity **for the sake of the happiness of all beings, without exception** (and) equal to the reaches of space, in order that they may attain the level of buddhahood—also surpass making offerings to the buddhas?

> inserted root text: stanza 28
>
> Although (beings) wish to avoid misery,
> They actually run toward misery itself.
> Although they want to be happy, out of ignorance
> They destroy their own happiness as they would an enemy.

[285] **Although** all sentient beings **wish to avoid** the undesired **misery** of this and future lives such as (having) a short lifespan, (contracting) many diseases, lacking wealth, and so on, yet their wishes and their actions contradict one another. By pursuing the ten non-virtuous actions such as killing, stealing, and so forth, **they actually run toward misery itself** in this and future lives, just as a moth leaps into a candle flame.

[286] Likewise, **although they want to be happy** in this and future lives, they do not know what to do and what to avoid, (which is) the method for (accomplishing happiness); **out of ignorance**, they not only fail to practice the ten virtuous deeds but instead commit various non-virtuous acts. Thus, **they destroy their own happiness** in this and future lives, looking upon (their own happiness) **as they would an enemy**.

> inserted root text: stanza 29
>
> (Bodhicitta) satisfies with all (the varieties of) happiness
> And cuts (free) from all suffering
> Those who are deprived of happiness
> And those endowed with many sorrows.

[287] Therefore, through its great kindness (bodhicitta) **satisfies with all** (the varieties of) temporary and ultimate **happiness**, **and** through its great compassion (bodhicitta) **cuts** (free) **from** the stream of **all suffering** in this and future lives, **those** beings **who are deprived** and destitute **of happiness** including its causes, **and** those miserable ones **endowed with many** causes and fruitions of **sorrow.**

> inserted root text: stanza 30
>
> gti mug kyang ni sel byed pa /
> de dang dge mtshungs ga la yod /
> de 'dra'i bshes kyang ga la yod /
> bsod nams de 'dra'ang ga la yod /

[288] shes-rab chen-po'i sgo-nas blang-dor-gyi-gnas-bstan-nas rgyu-'bras blang-dor la rmongs-pa'i-**gti-mug kyang ni sel**-bar-**byed-pa** yi rgyu **de dang dge**-ba stobs **mtshungs** gzhan **ga-la-yod** de med la /

[289] bde-ba-bsgrub-cing sdug-bsngal-sel-ba dang / blang-dor-gyi-gnas-ston-pa **de-'dra'i** phan-'dogs-pa'i-**bshes kyang ga-la-yod** de med-cing 'bras-bu **bsod-nams** kyang byang-chub-kyi-sems **de-'dra'ang ga-la-yod**[1253] de med-do //

[290] des phan-yon bstan-zin la / de-ltar phan-yon shes-pa'i don-po rin-chen byang-chub-kyi-sems de rang-gzhan gyi rgyud la mi skyed-pa'i thabs med nges snyam-nas rang-gzhan gyi rgyud la ma-skyes-pa bskyed-par-byed-pa dang / skyes-pa mi-nyams-shing gong-'phel-du-byed-pa'i thabs la bkres-pa zas dang skom-pa chu la gdung-ba lta-bu'i don-gnyer-gyi-'dun-pa chen-po sus-kyang bzlog-tu-med-pa zhig byung-na phan-yon shes-pa'i don-'bras byung-ba yin-gyi gzhan-du bshad-shes-pa-tsam-gyis ci-yang-mi-phan-pas sems thog-nas yang-yang sgom-dgos gsungs /

> inserted root text: stanza 31
>
> phan btags lan ldon gang yin pa /
> de yang re zhig bsngags 'os na /
> ma bcol legs par byed pa yi /
> byang chub sems dpa' smos ci dgos

[1253] B: sems de dang 'dra ba ga la yod

> inserted root text: stanza 30
>
> It clears away even ignorance.
> Where is there a comparable virtue?
> Where is there ever such a friend?
> Where is there merit similar to this (bodhicitta)?

[288] Through its great knowledge, (bodhicitta) teaches the points of what to do and what to avoid. **It clears away even** the **ignorance** of being unknowledgeable about (karma, the law of) causes and fruitions, about what to do and what to avoid. **Where is there** any other **comparable** power of **virtue** and its causes**?** None exists.

[289] (Bodhicitta) accomplishes happiness and dispels misery. It teaches the points of what to do and what to avoid. **Where is there ever such a** helpful **friend?** None exists. **Where is there** ever even a fruitional (outcome), **a merit similar to this** bodhicitta**?** None exists.

[290] With these (stanzas Śāntideva) has shown the benefits (of bodhicitta). The purpose of knowing these benefits is that if you think, "This precious bodhicitta absolutely must be developed in my mind and in the minds of others," then you will pursue the methods for developing (bodhicitta) if it has not yet been born in your own mind and in the minds of others. You will not let it degenerate once it is developed; rather you will (pursue methods to) increase it more and more, just like a hungry person who longs for food and a thirsty person who longs for water. Whoever has this irreversible, great, earnest wish has already obtained the result of knowing the benefits. However, merely knowing how to explain (the benefits of bodhicitta) to others is completely useless. You must meditate on (bodhicitta) over and over again in your own mind.

The greatness of a person who is endowed with a mind that has developed bodhicitta

> inserted root text: stanza 31
>
> If even a person who returns a favor
> Is worthy of being praised to some extent,
> Then what need to mention bodhisattvas
> Who do good without being asked?

[291] gsum-pa sems-bskyed rgyud-ldan-gyi gang-zag gi che-ba ni / sngar zas nor sogs-kyis **phan-btags**-pa la phyis 'dis phan-btags-so zhes tshur **lan-ldon**-pa **gang-yin pa de yang** / byas-ba shes-shing drin-bzo-ba'i // mi la dpal-mgon nye-bar-gnas // zhes byas-pa shes-pa la lha-rnams kyis bsrung-ba sogs yon-tan yang che-zhing **re-zhig** 'jig-rten na bstod-cing **bsngags**-par-'**os-na** / sngar rang-gis phar-phan-ma-btags-shing[1254] phan-pa-sgrub-par sus-kyang **ma-bcol** bzhin-du 'di-phyi kun-tu **legs**-pa'am phan-bde'i-thabs 'ba'-zhig sgrub-**par-byed-pa yi byang-chub-sems-dpa'**-rnams la mchod-cing bstod-de bsngags-par-'os-pa **smos-ci-dgos** so //

> inserted root text: stanza 32
>
> 'gro ba nyung zad nar ma'i zas sbyor ba /
> skad cig zas tsam sbyin par byed pa dang /
> brnyas bcas nyin phyed 'grangs par byed pa yang /
> dge ba byed pa yin zhes skye bos bkur /

[292] dpe la brten-nas don ngo-shes // zhes-pa ltar / dpe las don lhag-par shes-pa yul-dman-pa brgya'am stong la-sogs-pa '**gro-ba nyung-zad**-tsam la **nar-ma'i** zhes lo'am zla-bar[1255] nyin-bzhin nar-ma ste rgyun-ma-bcad-pa'i **zas**-sbyin-pa'am **sbyor-ba** / de-yang / dus-dman-pa bya-rdzogs-kyi-**skad-cig**-ma la / dngos-po-dman-pa yon-'bul-ba-med-pa'i **zas-tsam sbyin-par-byed-pa dang** / sbyor-ba-dman-pa brdung rdeg[1256] la-sogs-pas[1257] **brnyas**-bcos dang **bcas**-pa'i sgo-nas / phan-'dogs-dman-pa **nyin-phyed**-tsam la lto-'**grangs-par-byed-pa** yi sbyin-bdag la **yang** 'jig-rten na sbyin-gtong rgya-chen-po'i **dge-ba-byed-pa yin**-no **zhes skye-bo** mang-pos bstod-cing **bkur**-bar-'os-pa yin-na /

> inserted root text: stanza 33
>
> sems can grangs mtha' yas la dus ring du /
> bde bar gshegs kyi bde ba bla na med /
> yid la bsam pa mtha' dag rdzogs byed pa /
> rtag tu sbyin pa lta zhig smos ci dgos /

1254 B: sngar rang gis phan ma btags shing
1255 B: zla ba
1256 B: brdeg
1257 B: la sogs

[291] Third, the greatness of a person who is endowed with a mind that has developed bodhicitta: **If even a person who returns** (a favor) to someone who did him **a favor** previously with food, money, and the like, later saying, "This person has helped me before," (is considered to have) great qualities, such as the gods' protection of those who remember what has been done (for them)—(about which) it is said: "People who remember what has been done for them and repay that kindness will be surrounded by the glorious protectors"—and (so such a person) **is worthy of being** lauded and **praised to some extent** in the world, **then what need to mention** the praiseworthiness of **the bodhisattvas**, **who** should be presented with offerings and should be lauded, (as they are) those who **do** (in fact) practice only methods of **good**ness and welfare for this and all future lives, who give help **without being asked**, even though they themselves have not been helped before.

> inserted root text: stanza 32
>
> (If) someone who donates food continuously to a few people
> And someone who only gives food once,
> And even someone who satiates them for half a day in a condescending manner
> Is honored by people, saying, "He performs virtue!" (then)

[292] As it is said: "Based on the example one can understand the meaning," so through an example one understands the meaning better. If **someone who** gives or **donates food continuously**—meaning uninterruptedly, for a year, a month, or a day—**to** just **a few** hundred or a thousand **people**, (which is) an inferior, (limited), object; or **someone** (else) **who only gives food**, an inferior substance, without donating any (additional) valuable gifts, just **once**, for the time-span it takes to complete this action, an inferior, (limited), time-span; **and even someone**, a benefactor, **who satiates them** with food only **for half a day**, an inferior service, (and does that) **in a condescending manner**, such as beating and hitting them, which is an inferior treatment, and **is**, in the (eyes of the) world, (still) worthy of being lauded and **honored by** many **people, saying, "He performs** the **virtue** of (making) vast donations,**"** then,

> inserted root text: stanza 33
>
> What need to mention those who always bestow such (a great gift),
> The peerless bliss of the sugatas,
> For a long period upon boundless multitudes of beings,
> (Thus) fulfilling all their wishes?

[293] byang-chub-sems-dpa'-rnams de-ltar yul-dman-pa ma-yin-pa nam-mkha'-dang-mnyam-pa'i **sems-can**-gyi-khams **grangs mtha'-yas**-pa rnams **la** dus-dman-pa ma-yin-pa **dus-ring**-po 'khor-ba-ma-stongs-kyi-bar-**du** / dngos-po dman-pa ma-yin-pa **bde-bar-gshegs**-pa sangs-rgyas-**kyi-bde-ba bla-na-med**-pa / sbyor-ba-dman-pa ma-yin-pa zhi-zhing gus-pa dang bcas-pa'i sgo-nas / phan-'dogs dman-pa[1258] ma-yin-pa khyad-par-can rang-rang gi **yid la** gang-ci **bsam-pa mtha'-dag** ma-lus-pa **rdzogs**-par-**byed-pa** rgyun-mi-'chad-pa'i **rtag-tu sbyin-pa**-chen-po de-**lta**-bu-**zhig** gtong-ba'i sbyin-bdag byang-chub-sems-dpa'-rnams bstod-cing bkur-bar-'os-pa **smos-ci-dgos** so//

> inserted root text: stanza 34
>
> gang zhig de 'dra'i rgyal sras sbyin bdag la /
> gal te ngan sems skyed par byed pa de /
> ngan sems bskyed pa'i grangs bzhin bskal par ni /
> dmyal bar gnas par 'gyur zhes thub pas gsungs /

[294] sems-can **gang**-su-**zhig**-gis gong-du-bshad-pa **de-'dra'i rgyal**-ba'i-**sras**-po sangs-rgyas-kyi-go-'phang sbyin-pa'i **sbyin-bdag** chen-po de **la** lus ngag gis gnod-pa lta-ci / **gal-te** zhe-sdang la-sogs-pas 'di la ma-rung-ba-zhig byung-na snyam-pa'i **ngan-sems**-tsam-zhig **bskyed-par-byed-pa de** / **ngan-sems-bskyed-pa'i grangs-bzhin**-te zhes 'dir skyes-bu stobs-ldan gyis se-gol-gcig-brdab-pa'i yun drug-cu-rtsa-bzhir bgos-pa'i yun-gcig dus-mtha'i-skad-cig-ma ste / de'i grangs ji-snyed yod-pa de-snyed kyi **bskal-par ni dmyal-bar** sdug-bsngal chen-po myong-zhing **gnas-par-'gyur zhes thub-pas gsungs**-te /

> inserted root text: stanza 35
>
> 'on te gang zhig yid rab dang byed na /
> de yi 'bras bu de bas lhag par 'phel /
> rgyal sras rnams la do gal chen pos kyang /
> sdig pa mi 'byung dge ba ngang gis 'phel /

[295] rab-tu-zhi-ba-rnam-par-nges-pa-cho-'phrul-gyi-mdo las / 'jam-dpal byang-chub-sems-dpa'[1259] / byang-chub-sems-dpa' la khong-khro-ba dang brnyas-pa'i-sems ci-tsam-pa de-snyed kyi bskal-par sems-can dmyal-bar-gnas-par go-cha-bgo-bar-bya'o // zhes gsungs-so //

[1258] B: phan 'dogs pa dman pa

[1259] C: 'jam dpal byang chub sems dpas

[293] **What need to mention** that the bodhisattvas, the benefactors, are worthy to be praised and honored, (as they are) **those who always** and constantly **bestow such** a great gift, not upon an inferior object but **upon boundless multitudes** of realms **of beings** equal to the reaches of space; not for an inferior time-span but **for a long period** until saṃsāra is emptied; not with an inferior substance but with **the peerless bliss of the sugatas**, the buddhas; not with an inferior treatment but in a peaceful and respectful manner; (and) not with inferior service but especially **fulfilling all their** individual **wishes**, without excluding any?

> inserted root text: stanza 34
>
> The Sage has said, "Whoever bears an evil thought
> Against such a son of the victors, a benefactor,
> Will remain in hell for as many aeons
> As the number of his evil thoughts."

[294] **The Sage**, (the Buddha), **has said, "Whoever** among beings, no matter whether he (actually) inflicts harm with his body and speech, or even if he only **bears** in anger, or in another (afflicted state of mind), **an evil thought**, (such as) wishing, "If (only) something bad would befall this one… ," **against such a son of the victors—a** great **benefactor** who grants the level of buddhahood, as explained above—(such a person) **will remain in hell** and experience great suffering **for as many aeons as the number of his evil thoughts**. This is to say that if one divides into sixty-four moments the time-span it takes a strong man to snap his fingers, then one of these (sixty-four) moments is (called) 'an ultimate split second'. (One must remain in hell) for as many (aeons) as there are (split seconds in a negative thought).

> inserted root text: stanza 35
>
> But whoever (looks at a bodhisattva) with a devoted mind,
> The fruits of this will multiply far more than these (evil thoughts).
> Even in greatest adversity, the sons of the victors
> Never generate negativity; instead, their virtues naturally increase.

[295] As it is said in the *Praśānta-viniścaya-prātihārya-sūtra*: "Bodhisattva Mañjughoṣa! Be forewarned, since for as long as someone has a mind full of anger or contempt toward a bodhisattva, for that many aeons will that being dwell in hell."

[296] **'on-te** sems-can **gang**-su-**zhig**-gis **yid-rab**-tu-dga'-zhing **dang**-ba'i-sems-kyis byang-chub-sems-dpa' de'i zhal-du blta-bar-**byed-na de yi 'bras-bu** ni de'i yun-gyi-skad-cig gi grangs de-snyed las lhag-pa'i bskal-pa'i grangs-su dga'-ldan-lha'i bde-ba myong-ba la-sogs-pa rgya-che-bas-na ngan-sems kyi 'bras-bu **de-bas lhag-par 'phel**-ba skye-ste /

[297] nges-pa-dang-ma-nges-par-'jug-pa'i-phyag-rgya'i-mdo las / 'jam-dpal yongs-su-brtag-pa-bzung-nas gal-te phyogs-bcu'i-'jig-rten-gyi-khams thams-cad kyi sems-can thams-cad kyi mig-phyung-bar-'gyur la / yongs-su-brtag-pa-bzung-ste rigs-kyi-bu'am rigs-kyi-bu-mo gang la-las sems-can de-dag thams-cad la byams-pa'i sems kyis de-dag-gi mig-bskyed-pa-bas / 'jam-dpal rigs-kyi-bu'am rigs-kyi-bu-mo gzhan-gang-gis theg-pa-chen-po la mos-pa'i byang-chub-sems-dpa' la dad-pa'i-sems-kyis blta-na 'di-ni de-bas bsod-nams ches grangs-med-pa bskyed-do // zhes gsungs-so //

[298] **rgyal-sras** byang-chub-sems-dpa'-**rnams la do-gal**-te kha zas-med / rgyab gos-med / lag nor-med / mi-shi phyugs-'thor / nad-gdon dgra 'dre'i gnod-'tshe sogs rkyen-ngan **chen-pos kyang** zhes chen-po ji-tsam byung-yang ltas-ngan g.yang-du 'gug-cing rkyen-ngan grogs-su-'char-ba'i gang-zag yin-pas-na /

[299] chos-kyi bar-ched-du-mi-'gyur-bas **sdig-pa mi-'byung**-bar ma-zad sdig-pa'i-bshags-ma / dge-ba'i-bskul-mar gyur-te nges-'byung dang byams snying-rje sogs **dge-ba ngang-gis** gong-nas-gong-du **'phel**-bar-'gyur-te[1260] dper-na rgyal-bu-sbyin-pa-la-dga'-ba dang / rgyal-po-gtsug-na-nor-bu bzhin-no //

[300] de-yang byang-sems snying-stobs zhan-cing thabs-la-mi-mkhas-pa-rnams ni rkyen-ngan phra-mo re-byung-yang mi-bzod-pa /

> lto-'grangs nyi-mas dros-tshe chos-pa'i-gzugs //
> rkyen-ngan thog-tu bab-tshe tha-mal-pa //

zhes gsungs-pa lta-bu dang /

[301] blo-brtan-cing thabs-la-mkhas-pa-rnams ni / thogs-med-kyis /

> snod-bcud sdig-pas gang-ba'i-tshe //
> rkyen-ngan byang-chub lam-du-bsgyur //

zhes sogs gsungs-pa ltar /

na-tsha sdug-bsngal dgra-'dre sogs rkyen-ngan ci-byung-yang de'i dbang-du-mi-gtong-bar byang-chub-sgrub-pa'i grogs-su-'gro-ba ni mar-me dang nags-kyi-me la rlung-gis rim-par gnod-pa dang / grogs-su-'gro-ba lta-bu'o //

1260 B: ngang gis gong du 'phel bar 'gyur te

[296] **But whoever** among sentient beings looks at a bodhisattva with the attitude of **a** joyous and **devoted mind**, **the fruits of this** are vast, such as experiencing the happiness of the gods of Tuṣita for many more aeons than the number of seconds of the duration (of looking with devotion at the bodhisattva), and therefore **will multiply far more than these** fruitional results of (having) negative thoughts (toward a bodhisattva).

[297] As it is said in the *Niyatāniyatā-mudrāvatāra-sūtra*: "Mañjuśrī, in the completely unlikely case that the eyes of all sentient beings of all the worldly realms of the ten directions would fall out, and in the completely unlikely case that some noble sons and noble daughters were to reproduce these eyes out of love for all these sentient beings; Mañjuśrī, suppose some other noble sons and noble daughters were to look at a bodhisattva who is devoted to the great vehicle with an attitude of faith, they would generate incalculably greater merit than these (former)."

[298] **Even if the sons of the victors**, the bodhisattvas, are **in adversity** in the **greatest** difficult conditions, such as having no food to eat, no clothing to wear, no money at hand, with their relatives dead and their cattle lost, injured by afflictions such as diseases, disease-causing demons, enemies, spirits, and so forth, then however great they (these adversities) may be, (the bodhisattvas) are beings who turn bad omens into auspicious conditions, who allow bad conditions to arise as enhancements.

[299] Therefore, having no obstacles for the dharma, they **never generate negativity but instead** (treat difficult conditions as) something that serves as a purification of their (former) negative deeds and an encouragement to virtue. Thus, **virtues** like renunciation, kindness, compassion, and so on **naturally increase** more and more, as (seen) in the examples of Prince Dānarata and King Maṇicūḍa.[1261]

[300] Those bodhisattvas who are meek in courage and unskilled in methods cannot bear even a few minor inconvenient circumstances arising. As it is said:

> Well fed and warmed by the sun, he is a role model for practitioners;
> When meeting difficult circumstances, he is an ordinary being.

[301] But those who are stable-minded and skilled in means are as Asaṅga said:

> Even when the world and beings are filled with negativity,
> He transforms all difficult circumstances into the path to enlightenment.

Whatever difficult situations arise such as diseases, suffering, enemies, spirits, and the like, if one does not fall under their influence, they become an aid to accomplishing enlightenment, just as wind harms a candle flame but supports a forest fire.

[1261] See *Heaven Tree*, pages 11-15; *rtogs brjod*, page 12-22; and *rtogs brjod rtsa 'grel*, pages 442-445.

> inserted root text: stanza 36
>
> gang la sems kyi dam pa rin chen de /
> skyes pa de yi sku la phyag 'tshal zhing /
> gang la gnod pa byas kyang bde 'brel ba /
> bde ba'i 'byung gnas de la skyabs su mchi /

[302] gang-zag mchog-dman **gang-la sems-kyi**-rnam-rtog thams-cad kyi nang-nas **dam-pa** srid-zhi'i rgud-pa thams-cad sel-bar-byed-pa'i **rin-chen** byang-chub-kyi-sems **de skyes**-par-gyur-**pa de yi sku la** sgo-gsum gus-pa chen-po'i sgo-nas zhi-ba-lhas **phyag-'tshal-zhing** / byang-chub-sems-dpa' **gang-la** brnyas-thabs la-sogs-pa'i **gnod-pa-byas-kyang** / bzang-'brel tshe-gcig-sangs-rgyas / ngan-'brel 'khor-ba-mtha'-can zhes-pa ltar yin-pas snying-rje dang byang-chub-kyi-sems dang thabs-mkhas dang smon-lam kyi stobs kyis gnas-skabs dang mthar-thug gi **bde**-ba dang **'brel-ba** ste thob-par-mdzad-de dper-na drang-srong-bzod-par-smra-ba dang / rgyal-po-byams-pa'i-stobs bzhin-no //

[303] des-na rnam-pa thams-cad-du 'brel-tshad don-dang-ldan-pas 'di-phyi'i **bde-ba** thams-cad-pa**'i 'byung-gnas** skyes-bu dam-pa byang-chub-sems-dpa' **de** rnams **la skyabs-su-mchi** zhes skyabs-su-song-ba ltar bdag-cag-gis kyang rgyal-sras byang-chub-sems-dpa'-rnams la phyag-'tshal-zhing skyabs-su-'gro-bar-bya'o //

[304] 'o-na gong-du byang-sems la ngan-sems-byas-pas dmyal-bar-skye zhes dang / 'dir gnod-pa-byas-pas bde-ba dang 'brel zhes-pa gnyis mi-'gal-lam zhe-na mi-'gal-te /

[305] snga-ma ni las-'bras bslu-med yin-pa'i ngos-nas ngan-sems-kyis 'phral-du dmyal-bar-skye-ba la dgongs-pa dang / 'dir byang-chub-sems-dpa'i snying-rje dang byang-chub-kyi-sems-kyis thabs-la-mkhas-pa dang smon-lam dbang-btsan-pas rjes-su-'dzin-pa la dgongs-pa yin-pas-so //

inserted root text: stanza 36

I pay respect to the body of those
In whom this sacred and precious mind has arisen
And who link to happiness even those who have caused them harm.
To that very source of happiness I go for refuge.

[302] **I**, Śāntideva, **pay respect**, with (my) three gates[1262] in most respectful manner, **to the body of those in whom**, be they high or low persons, **this precious** bodhicitta **has arisen**, (which is) the (most) **sacred** among all thoughts of the **mind**, expelling all impediments of existence and peace; **and who,** through the power of their compassion, their bodhicitta, their skill in means, and their aspirations cause to reach or **link to** temporary and ultimate **happiness**, as in the example of Sage Kṣāntivādin[1263] and King Maitrībala,[1264] **even those who have caused them harm**, (who have harmed) the bodhisattvas by belittling them and the like. For them it is just as is said: "In the case of an auspicious connection you will reach buddhahood in one lifetime, and in case of a negative connection, you will eventually reach the end of saṃsāra."

[303] Just as (Śāntideva) has gone for refuge by saying, "**I go for refuge in** these bodhisattvas, in these sublime beings, (who are) **that very source of** all **happiness** for this and future lives," since, because they bring benefit to anyone who ever connects with them under any circumstance, we also should, therefore, also pay respect and go for refuge to the sons of the victors, the bodhisattvas.

[304] Well then, earlier (in stanza thirty-four), it was said that developing a negative attitude toward a bodhisattva leads to rebirth in hell, and here (in stanza thirty-six), (Śāntideva) says that even causing harm (to a bodhisattva) links one to happiness. If someone were to ask, "Don't these two statements contradict one another?" (the answer is) they do not contradict each other.

[305] The former (statement) conveys the meaning that, from the perspective of the results of actions being unfailing, those with a negative attitude (toward a bodhisattva) will immediately be reborn in hell. Here, (stanza thirty-six) conveys the meaning that through a bodhisattva's compassion and bodhicitta, and through a bodhisattva's skill in means and powerful aspirations, he (even) takes care of (beings who have a negative attitude toward him; due to their link with him, their rebirth in saṃsāra will eventually come to an end).

[1262] The three gates [sgo gsum] are body, speech and mind.

[1263] See *Garland of Birth-Stories*, pages 253-268 as well as *Heaven Tree*, pages 193-194.

[1264] See *Garland of Birth-Stories*, pages 55-71.

[306] de-ltar sems-bskyed rgyud-ldan la yon-tan yod-par shes-pa'i don-po rang-gis byang-sems-rnams la sngar sgo-gsum gyi nyes-pa gang-byas la bshags-sdom-byed-cing skyabs-su-'dzin-na don-'bras byung-ba yin-kyi shes-shing bshad-pa tsam-gyis ci-yang-mi-'ong-bas sems-thog-tu-blangs-te bsgom dgos /

[307] de'ang spyir bod 'di 'phags-pa-thugs-rje-chen-po'i 'dul-zhing theg-chen-gyi-rigs-can du gsungs-shing deng phal-cher dbang-ma-thob-pa'ang-med-pas byang-chub-sems-dpa' lhar-bcas 'gro-ba'i phyag-mchod-kyi-gnas-su-gyur-pa la-sogs-pa'i yon-tan mang-po dang ldan-pa'i gang-zag khyad-par-can-zhig yin la ma-'ongs-pa'i-sangs-rgyas-kyang yin-pas de-dag la rang-gis sngon-chad log-lta sgro-skur sogs byas-pa yod-na bshags-sdom-bya zhing / deng phyin-chad dag-snang-sbyang-ba dang phyag-mchod dang skyabs-gnas-su-'dzin dgos-te /

[308] snyigs-ma'i-dus-na byang-sems rnams la gang-zag gzhan la bsten-pa'i nyes-pa shin-tu 'byung-nye-bar mdo las gsungs-pas-na sems-can-rnams kyi skyon[1265] la mi lta-bar dag-snang-sbyangs-pa gal-che ste rgya-gar gyi bram-ze zla-ba lhar-'dzin-pa rnams kyis zla-ba-nya-ba la phyag-mi-bya-bar tshes-kyi-zla-ba la phyag-bya-ba ltar byang-sems la phyag-bya-bar gsungs-pa dang /

[309] gal-te nyes-pa'i-skyon-zhig yod-na-yang de 'dus-byas yin-pa'i phyir lam-bsgom-pa'i-stobs-kyis zad-de sangs-rgyas-par-'gyur-ba yin-gyi dang-po-nas skyon-med-pa-zhig-gis sangs-rgyas-thob-pa ma-yin-pas-na sems-can gyi nyes-skyon la mi blta-ba 'di gal-che-ba'i man-ngag yin gsungs /

> inserted root text: chapter title
>
> byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-spyod-pa-la-'jug-pa las byang-chub-sems kyi phan-yon bshad-pa zhes-bya-ba ste / le'u dang-po'o //

[310] le'u'i mtshan ni / byang-chub-sems-dpa'i-spyod-pa-la-'jug-pa las byang-chub-sems kyi phan-yon bshad-pa zhes-bya-ba ste le'u dang-po'o //

[1265] B: sems can kyi skyon

[306] The importance of knowing the qualities of those endowed with a mind that has developed bodhicitta is that if you make confessions and commitments concerning whatever misdeeds you previously committed with (your) three gates[1266] toward the bodhisattvas and take (the bodhisattvas) as your refuge, you will have positive results. But merely knowing (that this is true) and explaining it (to others) is in no way sufficient. You must take it to heart and meditate on it.

[307] In general, Tibet is said to be an area tamed by Ārya Mahākaruṇā (Avalokiteśvara) and (a country of those) with affinity toward the Mahāyāna. As most people (in Tibet) in these days have received empowerments, they are special beings endowed with many qualities, such as having become bodhisattvas, recipients of respect and offerings from humans and gods. They will even become the buddhas of the future. Therefore, if you previously developed wrong views about these (people), (expressed) exaggeration as well as denigation (about them), and so forth, you should make confessions and resolutions (not to repeat these deeds in the future). From today onward, you should train in pure perception and take (all such beings) as objects of respect, offerings, and refuge.

[308] The sūtras say that at this time of degeneration the bodhisattvas will have many defects in relating to other beings. Therefore, it is important not to look at beings' mistakes but to train in pure perception. Just as the Brahmins of India, who considered the moon to be a god, did not pay respect to the full moon but paid respect only to the moon of the (third) day, in the same way (as the moon of the third day will become full), you should be respectful to the bodhisattvas (who will become buddhas).

[309] If (a bodhisattva) possesses some faults of wrong-doing, then, because (wrong-doings) are compounded, they will be ended through the power of (the bodhisattva's) meditation along the path, and he will (finally) attain buddhahood. It is like that, (and) not that anyone (ever) obtains buddhahood by virtue of being faultless from the outset. Therefore, do not look at the wrong-doings and faults of beings. This is a very important piece of advice.

Listing the name of the chapter

> inserted root text: chapter title
>
> From the *Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra*, the first chapter, entitled "Explaining the Benefits of Bodhicitta."

[310] The name of the chapter is: **From the *Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra*, the first chapter, entitled "Explaining the Benefits of Bodhicitta."**

[1266] The three gates [sgo gsum] are body, speech, and mind.

Khenpo Chöga's
Oral Explanations

of

Khenpo Kunpal's Commentary

Text section 37:

This *word-by-word commentary* [tshig 'grel] on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra was written by Khenpo Kunzang Palden, also known as Khenpo Kunpal, according to the teachings he received over a six-month period from his root guru, Dza Paltrül Rinpoche, who is here refered to as the *Mañjughoṣa-like teacher* ['jam dbyangs bla ma]. These precious teachings are titled *Drops of Nectar* [bdud rtsi'i thig pa]. The phrase *personal statement* [zhal lung] connotes that Khenpo Kunpal received in person the oral instructions, which are themselves definitive statements, directly from Paltrül Rinpoche.

Text sections 38-44:

In his preface Khenpo Kunpal includes his declaration of respect [mchod par brjod pa], his pledge to compose the commentary [rtsom par dam bca' ba], and a foreword [sgo brjod]. Text sections 38-42 cover the declaration of respect, text section 43 is the pledge to compose this commentary, and text section 44 is a short foreword. Text sections 45-133 introduce the prefatory topics. The actual commentary begins at text section 134.

In his declaration of respect, Khenpo Kunpal pays homage to his meditation deity and to the lineage of masters through whom the Buddhist teachings came down to him. This lineage begins with Buddha Śākyamuni, continuing on through the great bodhisattvas such as Maitreya, Mañjughoṣa ['jam pa'i dbyangs], the sixteen elders, the seven heirs to the doctrine, the great paṇḍitas and siddhas of India, the Tibetan translators, and all the great masters of the Old and New Translation Schools of Tibetan Buddhism, down to Khenpo Kunpal's root guru, Paltrül Rinpoche.

When the scholars of India and Tibet composed a treatise or a commentary they would always start out with lines of homage to their favored deity-form of the Buddha, called the *declaration of respect* [mchod par brjod pa]. The purpose of this was to invoke the blessing of the Buddha and to dispel any obstacles that might hinder their composition. 'Declaration of respect' means 'to make respectful praises' [gus bstod byed pa] or 'to supplicate the objects of offering' [mchod yul la gsol ba 'debs pa], as well as meaning 'to offer prostrations' [phyag 'tshal ba].

Both Mahāyāna and Vajrayāna Buddhism emphazise the importance of this direct link between devotion to one's root guru, the downpour of the Buddha's blessings, and the dawn of realization within one's own mind-stream. While the sūtra tradition considers the guru to be similar to the Buddha [sangs rgyas 'dra bo], the tantric tradition considers the guru to be the actual Buddha in person [sangs rgyas dngos]. The guru is regarded as the root of blessings. If the blessings of the guru do not enter into one's mind, the mind's full potential can never be actualized.

Respect is declared out of the intent to fully actualize the mind's potential [sems kyi nus pa rab tu sad phyir du]. If you compose a book, teach the dharma, enter into a debate or into your private meditation, you must always begin by bringing the blessings of your gurus down upon you through a supplication which opens up your heart and mind

[sems kha phye ba'i phyir du]. This will saturate your mind-stream with blessings and so lead you to realization.

Khenpo Kunpal first pays homage in Sanskrit to his chosen meditation deity, the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, whom Khenpo Kunpal, due to his pure perception and devotion, views as identical to his root guru, Paltrül Rinpoche. 'Declaration of respect' [mchod par brjod pa] also has the connotation of 'declaring one's respect to sublime objects' [yul dam pa rnams la mchod par brjod pa]. 'Sublime objects', objects worthy of refuge [skyabs 'os pa], refers, in the context of a Mahāyāna treatise such as this book, to the three jewels: the jewel of the Buddha, the jewel of the dharma, and the jewel of the saṃgha. The Mahāyāna saṃgha refers particularly to the bodhisattvas who dwell on the bodhisattva levels of realization, the ten bhumis.

When Khenpo Kunpal says *homage to the teacher Mañjuśrī*, he pays respect to Mañjuśrī with his body, speech, and mind [lus ngag yid gsum gyi sgo nas phyag 'tshal ba]. In doing so, he simultaneously acknowledges [khas len pa] the Buddha as his teacher, the dharma as his path, and the saṃgha as his companions along the path. This is possible since all three jewels are embodied within the form of the teacher Mañjuśrī. This declaration of respect is an expression of the faith [dad pa], devotion [mos gus], conviction [yid ches pa], and certainty [nges shes] which Khenpo Kunpal places in the buddha dharma, in his meditation deity, and in his sublime teacher, Paltrül Rinpoche.

Declaring one's respect before composing a treatise renders it beneficial for manifold sentient beings. If future students of the dharma find such a treatise, they will have faith in it, as they will be able to immediately recognize it as a Buddhist textbook [sangs rgyas kyi chos lugs kyi gzhung]. The declaration will inspire their faith and trust in the treatise [gzhung la dad pa dang yid ches]. If the author did not declare his respect to the buddhas at the very beginning of his treatise, future readers might have cause to doubt its validity.

A 'declaration of respect' [mchod par brjod pa] is not the same thing as a 'presenting of offerings' [mchod pa 'bul ba]. The 'declaration of respect' has several purposes: to cause any possible obstacles or adversities which might arise in the course of composing the treatise to subside, as well as to enable the author to successfully complete his composition free of obstacles in the beginning, during the middle, or at the end of the writing process. Beginning the treatise with such a declaration will inspire faith and trust in the reader and will sow an important seed of liberation [thar pa'i sa bon] in the reader's mind-stream.

Text section 38:

Namo means 'homage' [phyag 'tshal lo] in the Sanskrit language. *Guru* means 'master' or 'teacher'. *Mañjuśrī* is the name of the bodhisattva who particularly embodies the

quality of knowledge and wisdom. *Jñāna* means 'wisdom' or 'pristine cognition' [ye shes], and *satva* [sems dpa'] means 'being'.[1267]

Khenpo Kunpal next declares his respect in verses to the lineage masters through whom the Buddhist teachings in general, and the explanations of the Bodhisattvacaryāvatāra in particular, came down to him.

Text section 39:

Buddha Śākyamuni, here saluted as *the Lion of the Śākyas* [shākya seng ge], is the root or source of the lineage. In our present cycle of time known as the *Fortunate Aeon* [bskal bzang], it is said that one thousand buddhas will appear. Buddha Śākyamuni is the fourth buddha among these and is, therefore, called the 'Fourth Guide' [rnam 'dren bzhi pa].

Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna cosmology both teach that myriads of world systems[1268] develop over immeasurable time-spans and that they follow periodic cycles of evolution and degeneration. The time-span it takes for one world system to develop, abide, be destroyed, and then to remain in a state of emptiness after its destruction is what is known as 'one great aeon' [bskal chen gcig], or 'one great kalpa' in Sanskrit. These four stages of 'one great aeon' are also each individually regarded as aeons: the 'aeon of development' [chags pa'i bskal pa], the 'aeon of abiding' [gnas pa'i bskal pa], the 'aeon of destruction' ['jig pa'i bskal pa], and the 'aeon of emptiness' [stong pa'i bskal pa]. The duration of each of these four aeons is further broken down into twenty 'intermediate cycles' [bar bskal]. Consequently, 'one great aeon' [bskal chen gcig] consists of eighty 'intermediate cycles'.

The twenty intermediate cycles of an aeon of abiding [gnas pa'i bar bskal nyi shu] unfold according to three phases: the initial phase, the intermediate phase, and the final phase.

The initial phase: At the beginning, human life is measureless [dpag med]. The succession of birth within an aeon of abiding begins with birth as a god of 'Clear Light' ['od gsal]. Here, in Buddhist cosmology, the arrival at a human birth in our world comes about through a process of involution, through a degeneration from the superior state of birth in the realm of the gods.[1269] Slowly, due to craving, the stature of beings begins to deteriorate as their lifespan decreases from being measureless to being eighty thousand years until it is gradually reduced to a mere ten years.

This process of degeneration finally concludes with three periods of famine, plague, and war. Specifically, when the lifespan of beings is thirty years, they will experience a

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1267 Note that texts A and B say *samāya*, meaning 'pledge', 'promise', or 'spiritual bond' [dam tshig], instead of *satva*.

1268 One single world system ['jig rten gyi khams] includes Mount Sumeru, sun and moon, the four continents, the worlds of the gods of desire and the world of Brahmā.

1269 See *Myriad Worlds*, pages 133ff.

period of famine lasting for seven years, seven months and seven days. When the lifespan of beings is twenty years, there will be a period of plague lasting seven months and seven days. Finally, when the lifespan of beings has degenerated to a mere ten years, beings will experience a period of weapons and war lasting seven days. This entire sequence during which the lifespan of beings gradually decreases from measureless time down to a mere ten years is termed 'the initial lengthy decline' [ya thog ring mo], and is counted as 'one intermediate cycle' [bar bskal gcig].

The intermediate phase: The intermediate phase consists of 'the eighteen cycles of ascent and decline' ['phel 'grib spel ma bco brgyad], also known as 'the eighteen intermediate cycles' [bar bskal bco bgyad / bar khug bco brgyad]. In this context, 'one intermediate cycle' refers to the phases of both ascent and decline. In other words, one 'intermediate cycle' is the time required for the lifespan of beings to rise from ten years all the way up to eighty thousand years, and then to decline from eighty thousand years all the way back down to ten years. Eighteen of such consecutive periods are referred to as 'the eighteen intermediate cycles' [bar bskal bco bgyad]. Each of these cycles concludes at its nadir with the abovementioned periods of famine, plague, and war.

The final phase: Finally, after eighteen intermediate cycles, the lifespan of beings will again increase from ten years all the way up to measureless. This period is called 'the final lengthy ascent' [ma thog ring mo].

Taken together, these three phases collectively comprise the 'twenty intermediate cycles' [bar bskal]. Because of the slower pace during the ascent and decline at the beginning and end of the aeon, this lengthy initial decline and the lengthy final ascent are each counted independently as one intermediate cycle. During these twenty cycles of an aeon of abiding, the lifespans, body sizes, qualities, and degree of wealth of beings undergo cyclical fluctuations.

In general, a buddha only appears during an aeon of abiding, and further, during such an aeon only appears when the lifespan and merit of beings is decreasing and beings are in a pitiable state. Moreover, in order for a buddha to appear among beings, they must have collectively accumulated sufficient roots of virtue. The appearance of a buddha occurs due to the auspicious conjunction of a buddha's powerful aspirations with the aspirations and good karma of sentient beings.

A buddha is one who has perfected his aspirations [smon lam] as well as having perfected the two accumulations of merit and wisdom. Through the power of his aspirations, a buddha chooses a particular era in which to appear as a buddha. In particular, a buddha will appear at a time when the lifespan and the merit of sentient beings is decreasing, because at such a time beings are more inclined toward renunciation than in periods when their merit, lifespan, and wealth are increasing.

An aeon in which no buddha appears is known as a 'dark aeon' [mun pa'i bskal pa], and an aeon in which a buddha appears is called a 'bright aeon' [sgron me'i bskal pa]. There are said to be many 'dark aeons' and only very few 'bright aeons'.

Furthermore, it is a law of nature that in any given world system only one single perfectly enlightened buddha, a supreme nirmāṇakāya, appears at a time. The sphere of activity of one perfectly enlightened buddha is a cosmos consisting of a billion world systems in which he manifests countless emanations to benefit beings.[1270]

Each of the one thousand buddhas of the Fortunate Aeon appears when the lifespan of beings is declining from eighty thousand years down to one hundred years. No Buddha ever manifests when the lifespan of beings is over eighty thousand years or less than one hundred. This rule only applies to our world system during the Fortunate Aeon. In other world systems and in other aeons, buddhas appear at various times.

The scriptures maintain two different versions in regard to the arising of buddhas during the Fortunate Aeon. According to the Karuṇāpuṇḍarīka-sūtra, 1005 buddhas will appear; according to the Tathāgatācintya-guhya-nirdeśa-sūtra, 1000 buddhas will appear. Now we will give a summary of the story of how the one thousand buddhas of this Fortunate Aeon will appear, according to the Tathāgatācintya-guhya-nirdeśa-sūtra:[1271]

> In former times, during the aeon known as 'Perfectly Ornamented' [rnam par brgyan pa], there appeared a Buddha named Ananta-guṇanānāratna-vyāharāja.[1272] At that time, a universal monarch by the name of Dhṛtarāṣṭra,[1273] who ruled over four continents, had seven hundred thousand queens who gave him one thousand sons. Finally, his queens

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1270 One single world system ['jig rten gyi khams] includes Mount Sumeru, sun and moon, the four continents, the worlds of the gods of desire and the world of Brahmā.

The sum of 'a thousand single world systems' is called 'the first order of a thousand world systems' [stong dang po / stong dang po'i jig rten gyi khams / stong spyi phud kyi 'jig rten gyi khams] or 'the lesser order of a thousand world systems' [stong chung ngu'i 'jig rten gyi khams], which means 1.000 to the power of one.

One thousand 'lesser order of a thousand world systems' constitute 'the middle order of a thousand world systems' [stong bar ma'i 'jig rten gyi khams] or 'the second order of a thousand world systems' [stong gnyis pa; skr. dvi-sāhasra / stong gnyis pa'i jig rten gyi khams], which means a thousand to the power of two or one million separate world systems.

One thousand 'middle order of a thousand world systems' make 'the large order of a thousand world systems' [stong chen po'i 'jig rten gyi khams] or 'the third order of a thousand world systems' [stong gsum pa; tri-sāhasra], also called 'the third order, the larger order of one thousand world systems [stong gsum gyi stong chen po'i 'jig rten gyi khams; skr. tri-sāhasra-mahāsāhasro loka-dhātuḥ], which means a thousand to the power of three or one billion separate word systems—a trichiliocosm. For further details see *Buddhist Cosmology*, *Illuminator, Myriad Worlds*; and *Prince Jiṇ-Gim's Textbook.*

1271 See *Jewellery of Scripture*, pages 113-116 and *bu ston chos 'byung*, pages 55ff.

1272 de bzhin gshegs pa yon tan mtha' rin chen sna tshogs bkod pa'i rgyal po

1273 yul 'khor srung

Aninditā[1274] and Anupamā[1275] each bore him a son, who were known as Dharmacetas[1276] and Dharmamati.[1277]

Once, a unique thought arose in the mind of the universal monarch, "All my sons, the princes, are singularly inclined toward enlightenment. I must find out which of them will be the first to attain enlightenment." Accordingly, he wrote down the names of all the princes, deposited the name cards in an urn, and made extensive offerings for seven days. When the name cards were drawn, the name of Prince Viśuddhamati[1278] was the first to appear, and he received the prediction that he would become the Buddha Krakucchanda.[1279] Prince Vijayasana[1280] was to become the Buddha Kanakamuni;[1281] Prince Śāntendriya[1282] was to become Buddha Kāśyapa;[1283] Prince Savārthasiddha[1284] was to become Buddha Śākyamuni;[1285] Prince Mekhalin[1286] was to become Buddha Maitreya, etc.

The last of the one thousand sons was Anantamati.[1287] He made a special aspiration that the lifespans and activities of all the previous nine hundred ninty-nine buddhas would be unified within him. Thus, the last of the one thousand buddhas was predicted to be known as Buddha Rocana,[1288] meaning 'Buddha Aspiration'. Due to the power of this aspiration he will be the only buddha in this Fortunate Aeon whose lifespan will be immeasurable.

From among the last two sons, Dharmacetas and Dharmamati, Dharmacetas made the aspiration to receive all the teachings of the one thousand buddhas of this Fortunate Aeon and to become the Vajra-

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1274 ma smad pa

1275 dpe ma med

1276 chos sems

1277 chos kyi blo gros

1278 gzhon nu rnam par dag pa'i blo gros.

1279 'khor ba 'jig

1280 rnam par rgyal ba'i sde

1281 gser thub

1282 dbang po zhi ba

1283 'od srungs

1284 don thams cad grub pa

1285 shākya thub pa

1286 ska rags can

1287 blo mtha' yas

1288 sangs rgyas mos pa

> holder,[1289] the protector and guardian of the teachings of all the one thousand buddhas. Thus, he was prophesied to become the bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi,[1290] the compiler of the words [bka' sdud pa po] of all the thousand buddhas, and further, that in a future aeon he would become the Buddha Vajravikrāma.[1291]
>
> The last son, Dharmamati, made the aspiration to be the one to request each of the one thousand buddhas to set the wheel of dharma in motion. Due to the power of this aspiration he was to become the god Brahma.[1292] The father of all the one thousand and two sons, the universal monarch Dhṛtarāṣṭra,[1293] was to become the Buddha Dīpaṃkara,[1294] many aeons prior to our Fortunate Aeon.

According to Buddhist cosmology, India is called the 'Southern Rose Apple Continent', Jambudvīpa [lho 'dzam bu gling]. Each of the one thousand buddhas of this Fortunate Aeon will appear in India, will attain perfect buddhahood upon the vajra-seat at Bodhgayā, and will then turn the wheel of dharma.

The one thousand buddhas appear in different eras. Buddhist cosmolgy states that the history of the 'Rose Apple Continent', Jambudvīpa, unfolds in four distinct eras: the 'era of completeness' [rdogs ldan dus], the 'era of three-quarters' [gsum ldan dus], the 'era of two-quarters' [gnyis ldan dus], and the 'era of strife' [rtsod ldan dus; skr. kaliyuga].

The first era is called the 'era of completeness' because splendor [dpal] and enjoyments ['byor] are completely present. The second era is called the era of three-quarters because theft and sexual misconduct reduce the splendor and riches of the environment and its inhabitants by one quarter. Then, due to lying, the splendor and enjoyments are reduced to one half of their glory, and hence the third era is known as the 'era of two-quarters'. The fourth and final period is the 'era of strife', during which even the remaining one quarter of original abundance of riches and splendor gradually diminishes, this time principally due to murder and the other forms of non-virtue [mi dge ba'i las] committed by sentient beings.

Buddha Krakucchanda, the first among the thousand buddhas of this Fortunate Aeon, appeared in this world toward the end of an 'era of completeness'. He is also referred to as the 'First Guide' [rnam 'dren dang po]. Buddha Kanakamuni, the second among the one-thousand Buddhas, appeared in this world during an 'era of three-quarters'. He is also referred to as the 'Second Guide' [rnam 'dren gnyis pa]. During the 'era of two-quarters', Buddha Kāśyapa, the third among the one thousand Buddhas of this

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1289 lag na rdo rje

1290 phyag na rdo rje

1291 rdo rjes rnam par gnon pa

1292 tshangs pa

1293 yul 'khor srung

1294 mar me mdzes

Fortunate Aeon, appeared in this world. He is called the 'Third Guide' [rnam 'dren gsum pa]. Finally, toward the end of the fourth era, the 'era of strife' in which beings all quarrel with one another, Buddha Śākyamuni, the 'Fourth Guide' [rnam 'dren bzhi pa], appeared.

Each of the thousand buddhas of the Fortunate Aeon may appear at any time within these four eras. But, among all these thousand buddhas, only Buddha Śākyamuni appears at the end of an era of strife, at a time when the five degenerations are widely spread. It is this period in which we presently find ourselves.

The five degenerations [snyigs ma lnga] are the degeneration of time [dus kyi snyigs], the degeneration of sentient beings [sems can gyi snyigs ma], the degeneration of lifespan [tshe'i snyigs ma], the degeneration of actions [las kyi snyigs ma], and the degeneration of afflictions [nyon mongs pa'i snyigs ma]. Sometimes the 'degeneration of views' [lta ba'i snyigs ma] is listed in place of the 'degeneration of actions'.

The 'degeneration of time' refers to the era of strife like our present time, in which beings are tormented by famine, illness, and war. The 'degeneration of sentient beings' refers to the situation of beings born during the era of strife and also implies that the character [gshis ka] of beings has progressively deteriorated through the course of the four eras. The 'degeneration of lifespan' refers to the fact that during the era of strife, the lifespan of beings declines from one hundred years all the way down to ten years. Note that Buddha Śākyamuni appeared at a time when the lifespan was at the limit of one hundred years. No buddha in the Fortunate Aeon ever appears when the lifespan of beings is less than one hundred years.

The 'degeneration of actions' means that during the era of strife all sentient beings engage in the ten non-virtuous actions. The 'degeneration of afflictions' indicates that in the era of strife the afflictions of ignorance [gti mug], desire ['dod chags], anger [zhe sdang], jealousy [phrag dog], and pride [nga rgyal] are so strong that worldly remedies cannot overcome them. The 'degeneration of views' means that in this era of strife right views are decreasing, and views of eternalism and nihilism are flourishing.

At the times when the first five buddhas from among the one thousand buddhas of the Fortunate Aeon appear, the duration of the lifespan of beings will vary. During the time of Buddha Krakucchanda, the first of the thousand buddhas, the average lifespan of beings was forty thousand years. During the time of Buddha Kanakamuni, the second buddha, the average lifespan of beings was thirty thousand years. During the time of Buddha Kāśyapa, the third buddha, beings were able to live twenty thousand years. During the time of Buddha Śākyamuni, the fourth buddha, beings were able to live only one hundred years.[1295] The fifth Buddha [rnam 'dren lnga pa] will be Buddha Maitreya,[1296] who at present dwells as a bodhisattva in the heaven of Tuṣita. All

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1295 See *klong chen chos 'byung*, page 72; *Jewellery of Scripture*, pages 117-118 and *bu ston chos 'byung*, page 58.

1296 sangs rgyas byams pa

scriptures agree that when Maitreya appears as a buddha, the lifespan of beings will once again have returned to eighty thousand years.

Perfectly enlightened buddhas only appear when the lifespan of beings is on the decline from eighty thousand years all the way down to one hundred years. This may be either during the 'initial lengthy decline' or during the declining phase of any of the eighteen cycles of ascent and decline. Pratyekabuddhas also appear when the lifespan of beings is declining [mar 'grib] from eighty thousand down to one hundred years; in addition, pratyekabuddhas are also able to appear in phases when the lifespan of beings is on the ascent [yar skye] from one hundred years all the way up to eighty thousand years. This is because pratyekabuddhas principally appear for the sake of their personal realization and not for the sake of all sentient beings. A sentient being is able to attain the state of a pratyekabuddha only after having gathered the two accumulations for one hundred great aeons. When pratyekabuddhas finally reach their nirvāṇa, they abide continuously in a tranquil state of cessation until radiant light rays emanating from a buddha awaken them from this peaceful state, inspiring them and encouraging them to embark on the bodhisattva path to complete enlightenment.

A universal sovereign ['khor los sgyur ba'i rgyal po] appears in our world system only when the lifespan of sentient beings has progressed beyond eighty thousand years. It is said that a universal sovereign is adorned with preliminary indications of the thirty-two major marks of buddhahood; however, having chosen the path of a universal sovereign, the signs on his body have not fully matured into the fruitional signs which only appear on the body of a perfectly enlightened buddha.[1297]

According to the Bhadrakalpika-sūtra,[1298] each of the one thousand buddhas of the Fortunate Aeon can be identified by these following criteria: each will have an individual country of birth [skyes pa'i yul]; each will be born in a particular caste [rigs]; each will bear a particular family name [gdung]; each will display a unique aura of light ['od]; each will have his own father [yab]; each will likewise have a mother [yum]; each will father a child [sras]; each will have one primary attendant [rim gro pa]; each will have a pair of students, one of whom is supreme in wisdom [shes rab can] and the other who is supreme in magical powers [rdzu 'phrul can]; each will have an entourage, the saṃgha ['khor 'dus pa]; each buddha will have a particular lifespan [sku'i tshe tshad]; each will have a definite time-span during which his teachings will endure [bstan pa gnas pa'i tshad]; and each will leave specific relics [sku gdung]. Once a buddha has been cremated, it is possible for him to leave relics that continue to multiply, or he might leave one single relic [ril po gcig tu 'dug pa], that is to say his entire body. For example, in the case of Buddha Śākyamuni, his physical remains, such as his bones, teeth, and so forth, continue to produce relics [sku gdung las bab pa'i ring bsrel] that in turn

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1297 See *Myriad Worlds*, pages 134ff.

1298 See *klong chen chos 'byung*, page 72; *Jewellery of Scripture*, page 118 and *bu ston chos 'byung*, page 58.

continue to multiply. On the other hand, when some buddhas are cremated, what remains instead is one single relic, which is said to be indestructible.

For example, in the case of our present buddha, Buddha Śākyamuni, the sūtras tell us the following:

1. His country was the country of the Śākya clan [ser skya'i gnas].
2. His was of the royal caste [rgyal rigs].
3. The name of his family lineage [gdung brgyud / rigs rus] was Gautama [go'u ta ma].
4. The extent of his aura was one fathom ['dom gang].
5. His father was Śuddodana [zas gtsang sras].
6. His mother was Māyādevī [sgyu 'phrul lha mo].
7. His son was Rāhula [sgra gcan 'dzin].
8. His principal attendant was Ānanda [kun dga' bo].
9. His supreme pair of students were Upatissa,[1299] the one supreme in knowledge, and Kolika,[1300] the one supreme in magical powers.
10. His entourage consisted of the 2500 monks [dge slong stong nyis lnga brgya] of the original saṃgha ['dus pa dang po].
11. His lifespan was eighty years [lo brgyad cu].
12. The span of time during which his teachings will endure is five thousand years.
13. The relics of Buddha Śākyamuni are of the type which continue to multiply [sku gdung ni rgyas par 'gyur].

Each of the one thousand buddhas of the Fortunate Aeon will have the two assistants mentioned earlier. The first assistant is the bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi [phyag na rdo rje], who will always preserve and protect the complete teachings of each of the thousand buddhas [sangs rgyas stong gi bka' sdus ba po]. He is able to hear and retains the complete teachings of every buddha in their entirety. The second assistant is the god Brahma [tshangs pa], who requests each of the thousand buddhas to turn the wheel of dharma. Therefore, they are called the 'one thousand and two' [stong rtsa gnyis], meaning the one thousand buddhas and their two assistants.

These thousand buddhas all appear when the lifespan of beings is decreasing from eighty thousand years to one hundred years. The only exception is the last of the one

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1299 Śāriputra was given two names in his youth, Upatissa [nyer rgyal] and 'Son of Śārikā'. Śārikā was Śāriputra's mother. See *Tibetan Religious Art*, pages 65ff.

1300 Kolika [pang nas skyes], 'Lap-Born', was the given name of Maudgalyāyana. See *Tibetan Religious Art*, pages 66ff.

thousand buddhas, 'Buddha Rocana'; due to the power of his special aspirations, Buddha Rocana will appear at a time when the lifespan of beings is measureless.[1301]

Buddha Śākyamuni has four unique features [khyad chos bzhi] that distinguish him from among the thousand buddhas that appear in the Fortunate Aeon. His first unique feature is that he cares for the beings of this era of strife, an era in which the five degenerations are widespread. Among all the thousand buddhas, he is the only one who appears in such an unfortunate time.

At the time when the buddhas have not yet reached enlightenment but are still traveling the path as bodhisattvas, they all make specific aspirations for their future activities as buddhas. Buddha Śākyamuni, when he was still a bodhisattva, made five hundred great aspirations [smon lam chen po lnga brgya btab], all of which specifically entailed helping beings at the time when they, in general, would be tormented by the five degenerations.

None of the other buddhas that have appeared (or will appear) throughout the course of this Fortunate Aeon chose to emphasize such aspirations when they were traveling the bodhisattva path. Instead, it was their conclusion that sentient beings of the degenerate times would, in general, be unsuitable vessels for the dharma. Hence, Buddha Śākyamuni is considered to be *more courageous than the other guides of the Fortunate Aeon* [bkal bzang rnam 'dren gzhan las ches dpa' ba'i]. This manifest courage is the second of the four unique features [khyad chos bzhi] that distinguish him from the other buddhas of the Fortunate Aeon.

Due to his extraordinarily *compassionate development of bodhicitta* [snying rjes thugs bskyed] and the marvelous five hundred *aspirations* [smon lam] he made, Buddha Śākyamuni was 'praised as the White Lotus' [pad dkar ltar bsngags] by all the other buddhas of this aeon. This is the third of the four unique features [khyad chos bzhi] that distinguish Buddha Śākyamuni from the other buddhas of this Fortunate Aeon.

The fourth unique feature by which Buddha Śākyamuni is known is that of the immense power of blessing carried by his name. Whoever so much as hears his name will become a non-returner [mtshan thos phyir mi ldog]. Like a fish who has entered a fisherman's net, any being who makes a connection of any kind with Buddha Śākyamuni has entered into his net of compassion [thugs rje'i drva ba]. The immense blessing power emanating from Buddha Śākyamuni arises on the basis of his immeasurable qualities and due to the strength of his former aspirations. His compassion is beyond all concepts and thoughts and thus reaches out to all sentient beings, free from even the most subtle bias or partiality.

We will now summarize the tale of the one thousand and five buddhas of this Fortunate Aeon, which includes the story of Buddha Śākyamuni's unique aspirations, as it is recounted in the Karuṇā-puṇḍarīka:[1302]

1301 See *Jewellery of Scripture*, page 118 and *bu ston chos 'byung*, pages 58-59.

> In former times, in our present world-system, during an aeon known as Dhārana ['dzin pa], there lived a universal monarch named Araṇemi,[1303] who reigned over four continents and fathered one thousand sons. His chief household priest [mdun na 'don pa; skr. purohita] was the Brāhmaṇa, Samudrareṇu,[1304] who had eighty sons as well as one thousand Brāhmaṇa students. One of his sons, the Brāhmaṇa Samudragarbha,[1305] renounced the worldly life, entered into homelessness, attained perfect enlightenment, and came to be acclaimed as the Buddha Ratnagarbha.[1306]
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> All the sons of the universal monarch as well as all the sons and students of Brāhmaṇa Samudrareṇu gave rise to and developed the precious bodhicitta. Due to this, Buddha Ratnagarbha prophesied that each of them would attain buddhahood in the future. Following these predictions, each made aspirations to appear as buddhas in pure realms.
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> Finally, the Brāhmaṇa Samudrareṇu, looking with compassion upon the myriad beings scattered throughout the impure realms [zhing ma dag pa], those sentient beings who are bound to commit the ten non-virtuous actions [mi dge ba bcu] and the five heinous crimes [mthsams med lnga], and viewing their conditions, he made five hundred great aspirations. Samudrareṇu prayed that he would become a buddha in an impure realm, at a time when the five degenerations blazed fiercely.
>
> Hearing these noble aspirations, Buddha Ratnagarbha, the buddha of that era, spoke, "You are a bodhisattva who is like a white lotus;[1307] the other bodhisattvas resemble ordinary flowers." Thus, Buddha Ratnagarbha praised him and prophesied that he would become Buddha Śākyamuni, the fourth among the one thousand and five buddhas of the Fortunate Aeon.

In this time [deng 'dir] refers to the time of the five degenerations. *You demonstrate your supreme, fully manifest enlightenment* [mngon par rdzogs par byang chub pa mchog ston pa] means that after six years of seeking and practicing, at the age of thirty-five, Buddha Śākyamuni attained supreme and fully manifest enlightenment under the Bodhi Tree at Bodhgayā.

1302 See *Jewellery of Scripture*, pages 109-113; *bu ston chos 'byung*, pages 52-55; and *ston pa śākya thub pa'i rnam thar*, pages 8-16.

1303 rtsibs kyi mu khyud

1304 bram ze rgya mtsho'i rdul

1305 rgya mtsho'i snying po

1306 sangs rgyas rin chen snying po

1307 See *ston pa śākya thub pa'i rnam thar*, page 13: Then Sugata Ratnagarbha spoke: "Son of noble family! All other bodhisattvas are like flowers. You are like a white lotus" [de nas de bzhin gshegs pa rin chen snying pos bka' stsal pa / rigs kyi bu / byang chub sems dpa' gzhan ni me tog lta bu'o / khyod ni pad ma dkar po lta bu'o].

In the night preceding his enlightenment, Śākyamuni had formed the irrevocable resolve never to rise from his meditation seat unless he had attained fully manifest enlightenment. He entered into the 'vajra-like samādhi'; outwardly defeating all māras, inwardly purifying what remained of his cognitive obscurations [shes bya'i sgrib pa], he reached fully manifest enlightenment at the break of dawn. At the very moment that heralded the dawn, he attained fully manifest enlightenment.

Śākyamuni's enlightenment is called *fully manifest* [mngon par] because it resulted in the three kāyas; two of these, the 'form kāyas' [gzugs sku; rūpakāya], could later be perceived by sentient beings according to their capacities. Ordinary beings, both pure and impure, were able to meet Buddha Śākyamuni's nirmāṇakāya [sprul sku]. Bodhisattvas dwelling on the bhumis were able to meet his saṃbhogakāya [longs sku]. Nevertherless, even bodhisattvas dwelling on the tenth bhumi were unable to perceive his dharmakāya [chos sku].

Having no equal in spiritual attainment throughout the entire universe, Buddha Śākyamuni had become the *incomparable teacher* [ston pa mnyam med] of gods and men. Having taken birth in the Śākya clan, and being a great being, powerful like a lion, he became known as the *Lion of the Śākyas* [shākya seng ge]. Khenpo Kunpal beseeches Buddha Śākyamuni, "Please protect me with your loving kindness [brtse bas skyongs]!" He thus prays that the Buddha will always look after him through his enlightened body, speech, and mind.

Text section 40:

Ajita, the 'undefeatable one' or the 'invincible one' [mi pham pa / mi pham], is one of the many epithets of the great bodhisattva Maitreya [byams pa]. Maitreya is said to presently dwell in the Tuṣita heaven [dga' ldan] and in the future will take rebirth in our world system as the Fifth Guide [rnam 'dren lnga pa], the fifth buddha. Maitreya belongs to the group of the eight great bodhisattvas, also called *the eight close sons* [nye sras brgyad]. These bodhisattvas are the major lineage holders [chos bdag] of all the Buddha's Mahāyāna teachings.

Among the immeasurable qualities of the Buddha, eight of his foremost qualities manifest as the eight bodhisattvas: 1) the personification of the Buddha's wisdom [ye shes kyi rang gzugs] is Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī ['jam dbyangs]; 2) the personification of the Buddha's compassion [snying rje'i rang gzugs] appears as Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara [spyan ras gzigs dbang phyug]; 3) the personification of the Buddha's power or capacity [nus pa'i rang gzugs] is Bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi [phyag na rdo rje]; 4) the personification of the Buddha's activity [phrin las] is Bodhisattva Maitreya [byams pa]; 5) the personification of the Buddha's merit [bsod nams rang gzugs] arises as Bodhisattva Kṣitigarbha [sa yi snying po]; 6) the personification of the Buddha's qualities [yon tan gyi rang gzugs] appears as Bodhisattva Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣkambhī [sgrib pa thams cad rnam par sel ba]; 7) the personification of the Buddha's blessings [byin rlabs kyi rang gzugs] arises as Bodhisattva Ākāśagarbha [nam mkha'i snying po]; and 8) the personification of Buddha's aspriations [smon lam gyi rang gzugs] is manifest as Bodhisattva Samantabhadra [kun tu bzang po].

A student of Mahāyāna Buddhism should have a special meditation deity [lhag pa'i lha], a form of the Buddha upon which to meditate. This meditation deity may be Buddha Śākyamuni or any bodhisattva, such as one of the eight bodhisattvas. However, one should understand that in reality the eight bodhisattvas are eight aspects of the Buddha, revealing eight of the Buddha's special qualities. Buddha is wisdom, the wisdom of the dharmakāya [chos sku'i ye shes]. This wisdom manifests on the saṃbhogakāya [longs sku] level as eight wisdom qualities of the Buddha, appearing in the form of the eight bodhisattvas.

The bodhisattva manifestations function as gateways [sgo / 'jug sgo] or thresholds through which one approaches the wisdom of the Buddha. In this way we may understand the eight bodhisattvas to be none other than the natural expression [rang rtsal] of the Buddha's wisdom. This is the true reason they are known as the Buddha's close sons [nye ba'i sras]. When one understands the relationship of the Buddha and the bodhisattvas at this level, the sixteen elders are likewise understood to be the appearance of the natural expression of the Buddha's wisdom. That is why they are known as the 'sixteen emanated elders' [sprul pa'i gnas brtan bcu drug].

A practitioner may adopt Buddha Śākyamuni as his or her principal meditation deity. If one feels a special affinity toward any of the abovementioned qualities, one may choose the corresponding bodhisattvas as the practice deities in order to evoke these particular qualities of the Buddha. For example, Śāntideva's meditation deity was Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī.

The bodhisattva Maitreya meditated unceasingly on loving kindness [byams pa; skr. maitri]; thus the name Maitreya, 'Loving Kindness', was bestowed upon him. As the fifth of the one thousand buddhas of the Fortunate Aeon, he received a prophecy that he would in the future be known as Buddha Maitreya [sangs rgyas byams pa]. When he was near to completing the two accumulations of merit and wisdom, the buddhas of the three times conferred upon him the 'Great Rays of Light Empowerment' ['od zer chen po'i dbang].

At the time of Buddha Kāśyapa, the third of the thousand buddhas, Buddha Śākyamuni took birth in Tuṣita heaven and remained there among the gods, giving them teachings. When the time came for him to appear in our world, Śākyamuni placed a crown [prog zhu] on Maitreya's head, consecrating and empowering him as his regent [rgyal tshab tu dbang bskur ba]. Ever since, Maitreya has been universally renowned as 'the regent Maitreyanātha' [rgyal tshab byams pa mgon po]. Bodhisattva Maitreya continuously visualizes Buddha Śākyamuni above his head. Therefore, when other beings look at him, they are able to see an 'enlightenment stūpa' [byang chub mchod rten] over his head. Thus, he is depicted with an enlightenment stūpa on his uṣṇīṣa [gtsug tor], the protuberance that appears upon a buddha's head.

It is said that Buddha Śākyamuni's teachings will vanish from this world five thousand years after his first promulgation of the dharma. Buddhas appear only in phases of decline within a given aeon. Further, Buddha Śākyamuni appears near the very end of such a declining phase. Hence, during the time of Buddha Śākyamuni's

teachings, beings will have fallen increasingly under the power of afflictions, harming each other incessantly and commiting many negative deeds. Eventually, therefore, the merit of sentient beings in our world will decrease until their lifespan dwindles down to a mere thirty, twenty, and finally only ten years. The body size of sentient beings is eventually diminished to no more than the length of a thumb. Famine, plagues, and war will come to torment beings relentlessly. This suffering is a direct consequence of sentient beings repeatedly enacting the ten non-virtuous actions.

During the era when the lifespan of beings is declining from thirty years to ten years, three time periods called 'the three intermediate periods' [bskal pa bar ma gsum] will occur. These three intermediate periods occur at the end of every declining phase within a given aeon. These are known as: 1) the period of famine [mu ge'i bskal pa]; 2) the period of plague [nad gyi bskal pa]; and 3) the period of weapons [mtshon gyi bskal pa]. During these times our human world will be as miserable as the hell realms themselves.

1) When the lifespan of beings has declined to a mere thirty years, the 'period of famine' will arise. This famine will last for seven years, seven months, and seven days [zhag bdun zla ba bdun lo bdun]. Since at this time beings exclusively enact the ten non-virtuous actions, the nāgas will become upset, and the rains will stop. There will be no harvest, and the three kinds of famine [mu ge gsum] will ensue. Human beings will be described by such names as 'the hidden eaters' [gab tshe ba], 'the spoon eaters' [thur mas 'tsho ba], and 'the bare bones eaters' [rus gong dkar po pa].

At the time of 'the hidden eaters', food will be extremely difficult to obtain, and people will live only on grain stored in the past. Even a small amount of inferior grain ['bru ngan pa] will be treasured like a jewel, stored in vessels and jealously guarded. People will fear that their food will be stolen and will keep it very secret and hidden; thus beings will be called 'the hidden eaters'. Hunger will render people so weak that if they fall to the ground they will be unable to stand again. Others will be unable to help them up, being themselves too weak to lift them. Whoever falls to the ground will simply die.

At the time of 'the spoon eaters' [thur ma ba / thur mas 'tshol ba], food will have become so scarce that people can obtain no more than a few spoons of food at any one time. The small store of grain that people have will be cooked as a soup and everyone will receive only a few spoonfuls. Everyone gathered will jealously oversee the meal, making certain no one gets either too much or too little. Therefore, human beings in such times will be known as 'the spoon eaters'.

At the time of 'the bare bones eaters' [rus gong dkar po pa], food has become such a rare commodity that people are forced to cook up the bare bones of the dead, subsisting on nothing more than a soup of human bone. The bones they cook will lack any trace even of fat. Because humans are reduced to surviving on the bones of their dead, they are known as 'the bare bones eaters'. They themselves are emaciated, wasted away to mere skeletons, without an ounce of body fat. When that human birth has ended,

those born in the times of the bare bones eaters will immediately take rebirth in the preta realm, the realm of the hungry ghosts.

2) When the lifespan of beings has fallen to twenty years, the 'period of plague' arises. This plague will last seven months and seven days [zhag bdun zla ba bdun], during which people will be stricken with virulent epidemics of infectious diseases ['go ba'i yams nad]. All types of diseases with no known cures will arise in the human world, all due to the karmic fact that the asuras [lha ma yin], the demi-gods, will have become victorious in their celestial wars with the gods.

This particular detail of the story of the period of plague reveals the interdependent karma of our world system. When human beings abide by the ten virtuous actions [dge ba bcu], the merit they generate ensures the victory of the gods. On the other hand, when human beings spend their days commiting the ten non-virtuous actions [mi dge ba bcu], the victory of the asuras is assured. For this reason we can easily understand that the gods protect those who lead meritorious lives.

The Buddhist scriptures explain to us that when human beings engage in negative conduct, this directly increases the presence of demons and malignant spirits until negative forces dominate conditions in our human world. The power [nus pa] of these negative forces produces all kinds of diseases. As many of these diseases are for the most part incurable, the majority of human beings will die from them, only to be reborn directly into the hell realms.

3) When the lifespan of humans has dwindled to a scant ten years, the 'period of weapons' will arise. This war will last seven days, and during this time people's minds will be filled with uncontrollable aggression. People will not live according to the dharma but will single-mindedly pursue harmful intentions. Whatever they lay their hands on becomes a weapon; they will assault and murder one another on sight. The moment they die, they will take birth directly in the hell realms. The hell realms will be filled with countless former human beings.

After the period of weapons has passed, the remaining survivors will venture from the mountains and forests back toward towns and cities. Catching sight of others, for the very first time in their lives, they will experience joy and kindness. It is said that during the time after the period of weapons, an emanation of Bodhisattva Maitreyanātha[1308] will appear in this world. The surviving human beings will have very small bodies, and the body of Maitreya will be somewhat larger. He will radiate charisma and be clothed in robes of saffron. Seeing Maitreya, the human beings of that time will be amazed, wondering how he could be so much taller than they are. Maitreya will answer, "I have attained such a body because I practice patience and refrain from killing." Hearing this, the people will follow his example and abandon the senseless killing of their fellow human beings. This changed behavior will lead to an increase in lifespan of up to twenty years in their descendents. Hence, the emanation of Maitreya

[1308] byams mgon gyi sprul sku

in this human world will mark the beginning of another ascending phase within a given aeon.

Just as Maitreya's first emanation will teach human beings not to kill one another, another emanation of Maitreya will appear to teach the second virtuous action, to refrain from theft. The virtuous karma gained by abandoning stealing will increase up to thirty years the lifespan of the descendents of these human beings. In this way, emanations of Maitreya will gradually appear, teaching human beings to abide by the ten virtuous actions, resulting in an increased human lifespan. Gradually, the lifespan will again rise back to eighty thousand years.

When the lifespan of human beings has increased to seven hundred years, the sixteen elders [gnas brtan bcu drug] will appear to gather whatever remains in this world of Buddha Śākyamuni's teachings. They will place them in a stūpa made of the seven precious jewels. The sixteen elders will then sit around the stūpa, pay homage to Buddha Śākyamuni, and pass into nirvāṇa without any remainder. This will mark the final end of the presence of Buddha Śākyamuni's teachings in our world.

Maitreya will appear in our world as a fully enlightened Buddha only when the lifespan of human beings has reached eighty thousand years. Many pratyekabuddhas will appear in our world throughout the phase of ascent prior to this time. Just before Maitreya descends from Tuṣita heaven into our world, he will cast his gaze over the world, giving it a five-fold examination [gzigs pa lnga]. Like all buddhas he will choose the appropriate time [dus], the appropriate country [yul], the appropriate caste [rigs], the appropriate family [rus pa], and the appropriate mother [yum]. When he perceives the perfect conditions, Maitreya will take rebirth as the fifth buddha of this Fortunate Aeon.[1309]

These stories recount the buddhas' spiritual histories. They begin with the moment each first generated bodhicitta and continue through their gathering the accumulations of merit and wisdom for at least three incalcuable aeons.[1310] They conclude with the buddhas' attainment of enlightenment. These histories are found in both Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna sūtras and represent the 'provisional meaning' [drang don].

According to the 'definitive meaning' [nges don] on the other hand, which is recounted only in the Mahāyāna sūtras, all buddhas are primordially enlightened [ye sangs rgyas] and only demonstrate the appearance of traversing the path to complete enlightenment in order to inspire deluded beings to follow that path. In reality, a buddha is primordial wisdom beyond birth and death. What we perceive as a buddha arising in the world and passing into nirvāṇa is only a manifestation or emanation of this wisdom. Though all buddhas share the same wisdom realization, they are

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1309 For a detailed account of Maitreya's life story see *lam rim bla brgyud*, pages 141-161.

1310 Note that the term 'incalculable' or 'countless' [grangs med; asaṃkhya] is a number: ten to the power of fifty-nine. See *Jewellery of Scripture*, pages 144-145 and *bu ston chos 'byung*, pages 71-72.

individually distinct, just as one thousand butter lamps share the same light while each shines on its own.

Now we will mention the eight close sons, the sixteen elders, the seven generations of heirs to the doctrine, the six adornments of Jambudvīpa, and the two supreme ones.

First, *the eight close sons* [nye sras brgyad]: Among the infinite bodhisattva students of the Buddha, the eight close sons [nye ba'i sras brgyad] are the eight great bodhisattvas mentioned earlier, who dwelt constantly with the Buddha. Mañjuśrī ['jam dbyangs], Vajrapāṇi [phyag na rdo rje], Avalokiteśvara [spyan ras gzigs dbang phyug], Kṣitigarbha [sa yi snying po], Sarvanīvaraṇaviṣkambhī [sgrib pa thams cad rnam par sel ba], Ākāśagarbha [nam mkha'i snying po], Maitreya [byams pa] and Samantabhadra [kun tu bzang po]. They are called the eight close sons because they reached the tenth bodhisattva level and are thus close to the level of the Buddha's realization. They are also called the 'sons of the Victor' [rgyal ba'i sras; skr. jinaputra] because they are considered to be Buddha's heart sons [thugs kyi sras].

The *sixteen elders* represent the group of senior monks who attained the state of arhats. They are the senior elders, the leaders of the thousands of arhats among the Buddha's students. The term 'elder' [gnas brtan; sthavira] means a senior monk [dge slong rgad po], but not every arhat was an elder. Young children were also included among the many students of the Buddha who reached the spiritual attainment of an arhat.

These *sixteen elders*, along with the *seven generations of heirs to the doctrine*, are the lineage holders of the Hīnayāna teachings, also known as the śrāvakayāna, the 'vehicle of the listeners'. The śrāvakayāna teachings belong to the first turning of the wheel of dharma, 'the first set of teachings, the dharma wheel of the four truths' [bka' dang po bden bzhi'i chos 'khor]. Many śrāvakas were also present when the Buddha taught the second and the third turnings of the wheel of dharma, but they did not become lineage holders of these teachings.[1311]

The *seven generations of heirs to the doctrine* maintained the doctrine and the saṃgha after the Buddha had passed away. The Buddha had first entrusted Kāśyapa with the care of both the doctrine and the saṃgha. Just before Kāśyapa passed away, he in turn entrusted Ānanda with this task.

The sixteen elders [bnas brtan bcu drug; skr. ṣoḍaśa sthavirāḥ] are: 1. Aṇgaja [yang lag 'byung], 2. Ajita [ma pham pa], 3. Vanavāsin [nags na gnas], 4. Mahākālika [dus ldan chen po], 5. Vajrīputra [rdo rje mo'i bu], 6. Śrībhadra [dpal bzang po], 7. Kanakavatsa [gser be'u], 8. Kanakabharadvāja [bha ra dva dza gser can], 9. Bakula [ba ku la], 10. Rāhula [sgra gcan 'dzin], 11. Cūḍapanthaka [lam phran bstan],[1312] 12. Piṇḍola Bharadvāja [bha ra dva dza

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1311 For details on the three promulgations of the wheel of dharma see *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, pages 154-155.

1312 Also known by the name lam chung pa.

bsod snyoms len], 13. Panthaka [lam bstan],[1313] 14. Nāgasena [klu'i sde], 15. Gopaka [sbed byed], and 16. Abheda [mi phyed pa].[1314]

The seven generations of heirs to the doctrine [bstan pa'i gtad rabs bdun] are: 1. Mahākāśyapa ['od srung chen po], 2. Ānanda [kun dga' bo], 3. Śāṇavāsika [sha na'i gos can], 4. Upagupta [nyer sbas], 5. Dhītika [dhī ti ka], 6. Kṛṣṇa [nag po pa], and 7. Mahāsudarśana [legs mthong chen po]. These arhats and patriarchs passed on the Buddha's teachings from one to another in turn.[1315]

One year after the Buddha had passed into nirvāṇa, the saṃgha held the very first council meeting [bka' bsdu dang po]. Five hundred arhats gathered at the Banyan Cave [nyagrodha'i phug] in Rājagṛha [rgyal po'i khab] under the patronage of the Magadha king, Ajātaśatru [rgyal po ma skyes dgra], the son of King Bimbisāra [gzugs can snying po]. During the council meeting, Ānanda [kun dga' bo] recited the sūtra piṭaka [mdo sde'i sde snod], Upāli [nye ba 'khor] recited the vinaya piṭaka ['dul ba'i sde snod], and Mahākāśyapa ['od srung chen po] recited the abhidharma piṭaka [mngon pa'i sde snod]. These teachings were recited from memory to an audience of the five hundred arhats.

For the second council meeting [bka' bsdu gnyis pa] at Vaiśālī [yangs pa can], one hundred and ten years after the Buddha's passing, seven hundred arhats gathered under the patronage of the dharma king Aśoka [chos rgyal mya ngan med]. The council meeting was called in order to expunge ten specific transgressions [rung min gzhi bcu] that had arisen within the saṃgha. During the meeting, the ten transgressions were repudiated as non-dharmic, and the seven hundred arhats together recited the sūtra, vinaya, and abhidharma piṭakas, thus re-establishing harmony among the saṃgha.

The third council meeting [bka' bsdu gsum pa] was called a few hundred years after the Buddha's passing. Over time many differences had arisen in regard to the Prātimokṣa-sūtra,[1316] the code of discipline. This had led to a division of the Buddhist tradition into eighteen schools. It is said that the monks began to write down the teachings after the second council meeting. During and after the third council meeting, the vinaya piṭaka and the remaining teachings were written down. The precise location and dates of the third council remains subject to question.[1317]

The next groupings are the *six adornments of Jambudvīpa* ['dzam gling rgyan drug] and the *two supreme ones* [mchog gnyis].[1318] They are the most famous of the great paṇḍitas, the

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1313 Also known by the name lam chen pa.

1314 For an extensive account on the life stories of the sixteen elders see *Tibetan Religious Art*, pages 60 ff and *Crystal Mirror Vol. VI*, pages 216 ff.

1315 For the life stories of the seven generations of heirs to the doctrine see *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, pages 432-439 and *Crystal Mirror Vol. VI*, pages 202 ff.

1316 Prātimokṣa-sūtra [so sor thar pa'i do].

1317 For details on the three council meetings see *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, pages 428-431.

1318 For more details on the six adornments of Jambudvīpa ['dzam gling rgyan drug] and the two supreme ones [mchog gnyis] see *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, pages 440-441.

scholars from the *noble land* of India [rgya gar 'phags pa'i yul]. Among these sublime scholars, Nāgārjuna, Āryadeva, and Śāntideva are also counted among the group of the eighty-four mahāsiddhas, those realized yogins who accomplished both the relative as well as the supreme spiritual attainments.

The six adornments of Jambudvīpa, also known as 'the six adornments that beautify Jambudvīpa' ['dzam gling mdzes par byed pa'i rgyan drug], are in three pairs. The first, the 'adornments of madhyamaka' [dbu ma'i rgyan], are 1. Nāgārjuna[1319] and 2. Āryadeva.[1320] The second pair of masters, the 'adornments of abhidharma' [mgnon pa'i rgyan], are 3. Asaṅga[1321] and 4. Vasubandhu.[1322] The third pair, the 'adornments of valid cognition' [tshad ma'i rgyan], are 5. Dignāga[1323] and 6. Dharmakīrti.[1324]

Nāgārjuna, Asaṅga, and Dignāga are also identified with one another as the 'three authors of fundamental texts' [gzhung byed pa po gsum]. Āryadeva, Vasubandhu, and Dharmakīrti are similarly grouped as the 'three commentators' ['grel pa byed pa po gsum] on the writings of the three former masters, Nāgārjuna, Asaṅga, and Dignāga.[1325]

The two supreme ones [mchog gnyis] are Guṇaprabha[1326] and Śākyaprabha.[1327] Sometimes the phrase 'two supreme ones' is also used to refer to the two supreme masters from among the 'six adornments of Jambudvīpa', that is, Nāgārjuna [klu sgrub] and Asaṅga [thogs med].

Furthermore, also noteworthy are the 'two marvelous masters' [rmad du byung ba'i slob dpon gnyis]. Glorious Candrakirti,[1328] according to some sources Candragomin,[1329] was the one with the marvelous view [lta ba rmad du byung ba dpal ldan zla ba grags pa];

[1319] For biographical notes on Nāgārjuna [klu sgrub] see *History of Buddhism*, pages 121-128 and *bu ston chos 'byung*, pages 145-149.

[1320] For biographical notes on Āryadeva ['phags pa lha] see *History of Buddhism*, pages 129-130 and *bu ston chos 'byung*, pages 149-150.

[1321] For biographical notes on Asaṅga [thogs med] see *History of Buddhism*, pages 135-141 and *bu ston chos 'byung*, pages 152-155.

[1322] For biographical notes on Vasubandhu [dbyig gnyen] see *History of Buddhism*, pages 142-147 and *bu ston chos 'byung*, pages 155-157.

[1323] For biographical notes on Dignāga [phyogs glang] see *History of Buddhism*, pages 149-152 and *bu ston chos 'byung*, pages 158-160.

[1324] For biographical notes on Dharmakīrti [chos grags] see *History of Buddhism*, pages 152-155 and *bu ston chos 'byung*, pages 160-162.

[1325] See Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism, pages 440-441.

[1326] For biographical notes on Guṇaprabha [yon tan 'od] see *History of Buddhism*, pages 160-161 and *bu ston chos 'byung*, pages 165-166.

[1327] For biographical notes on Śākyaprabha [shākya 'od] see *Crystal Mirror Vol. VI*, page 310.

[1328] For biographical notes on Candrakirti [zla ba grags pa] see *History of Buddhism*, pages 133-135 and *bu ston chos 'byung*, pages 151-152.

[1329] See *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, page 441.

and Śāntideva,[1330] the author of Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, was the master with the marvelous conduct [spyod pa rmad du byung ba rgyal sras zhi ba lha]. Khenpo Kunpal is paying respect to all of these masters by *placing them above his head with hundred-fold devotion* [dad brgyas spyi bor bsnyen].

Text section 41:

The Victor, Buddha Śākyamuni, had prophesied that the dharma would spread in the future to Tibet, the *snowy land* [gangs ljongs]. The Indian scholar Śāntarakṣita [zhi ba 'tsho] came to Tibet and performed the original ceremony to ordain the first Tibetan monks at the monastery of Samye [bsam yas], the first Buddhist monastery formally established in Tibet. The Indian tantrika and spiritual teacher Padmasambhava tamed all the local spirits in Tibet and gave extensive teachings on all aspects of tantric Buddhism. These masters were invited to Tibet under the reign of the Dharma King Trisong Detsen, under whose rule Buddhism took firm root in Tibet.

King Trisong Detsen sent many young Tibetans to India on a mission to learn Sanskrit, to study with the great masters, so that they might be able to accurately translate the sūtras and tantras into the Tibetan language. Famous translators such as Vairocana, Kawa Paltsek [ska ba dpal brtsegs], Chokro Lui Gyaltsen [cog ro klu'i rgyal mtshan], Zhang Yeshe De [zhang ye shes sde], and others became the editorial heads of translation groups. King Trisong Detsen invited many Indian paṇḍitas to Tibet and so was able to ensure that the Sanskrit texts were in fact accurately translated into Tibetan.[1331]

All these masters are considered emanations of the buddhas and bodhisattvas. Therefore, Khenpo Kunpal's preface salutes them as the *treasure-trove of emanated translators and paṇḍitas* [lo paṇ sprul pa'i dpyid]. *Treasure-trove* [dpyid] has the multiple connotations of 'perfection' [phun sum tshogs pa], 'glory' [dpal], 'treasure' [gter], 'group' [tshogs pa], and 'chief' [gtso bo]. Without these masters, the dharma would never have taken root in Tibet, and a Tibet without the dharma would have been a country of spiritual darkness. These masters illuminated Tibet by teaching buddha dharma and are, therefore, called *eyes that gazed upon the snowy land* [gangs ljongs snang ba'i mig]. Theirs are the eyes that clearly and directly saw the truth of the sublime dharma [dam pa'i chos gsal ba mthong mdzad pa'i mig].

1330 For the three most important biographical notes on Śāntideva's life see *Legende de Śāntideva*, pages 161-182; *vibhūti dgongs 'grel*, page 236, folio 229b-231b; *History of Buddhism*, pages 161-166; *bu ston chos 'byung*, pages 166-169; *Tāranātha's History of Buddhism*, pages 215-220 and *rgya gar chos 'byung*, pages 201-206.

1331 For the early accounts on the spread of Buddhism in Tibet see *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, pages 510-522.

Paltrül Rinpoche taught that *three* supreme emanations of *Mañjughoṣa*[1332] appeared in Tibet [bod kyi 'jam dbyangs rnam gsum]: Sakya Paṇḍita Kunga Gyaltshen,[1333] Lord Tsongkhapa Lobzang Drakpa,[1334] and the omniscient Longchen Rabjam.[1335]

Khenpo Kunpal pays respect to all *the non-sectarian lineages of the Old and New Schools* [gsar rnying gi ris med brgyud pa rnams] without exception. All the sūtras, tantras, and commentaries that were translated during the time of the three great dharma kings, Songtsen Gampo [srong btsan sgam po], Trisong Detsen [khri srong lde'u btsan], and Tri Ralpachen [khri ral pa can] belong to this phase, known as the 'Early Translation Period' [snga 'gyur rnying ma]. This translation period began with the Tibetan translator and grammarian Thumi Sambhoṭa, who was assisted by the Indian scholar Devaviṭsiṃha.[1336] The last great Indian paṇḍita of this translation period was Smṛtijñānakirtī [dran pa ye shes]. The tantras, commentaries, and sūtras that were later translated by Rinchen Zangpo (958-1055) and the translators after him belong to the phase known as the 'Later Translation Period' [phyi 'gyur gsar ma].

Text section 42:

Khenpo Kunpal, as a Vajrayāna practitioner, considers his root guru [rtsa ba'i bla ma], Paltrül Rinpoche, as the manifestation of the omniscient wisdom [mkhyen pa'i ye shes], the loving compassion [brtse ba'i thugs rje], and the powerful activity [nus pa'i phrin las] of all the buddhas. He views Paltrül Rinpoche as inseparable from *the lords of the three families* [rigs gsum mgon po]: Mañjuśrī, Avalokiteśvara, and Vajrapāṇi.

From among these 'lords of the three families', Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī personifies the omniscient aspect [mkhyen pa'i rigs] of all the buddhas; Avalokiteśvara represents the compassion aspect [brtse ba'i rigs]; and Vajrapāṇi embodies the power aspect [nus pa'i rigs]. The 'omniscient aspect' of a buddha refers to the fact that a buddha knows everything throughout the three times and the ten directions. Nothing whatsoever can remain hidden or unknown to him.

The 'loving compassion aspect' of a buddha refers to the fact that the compassion and love of a buddha extend equally and impartially to all sentient beings without a single exception. The 'power aspect' of a buddha alludes to the blessing [byin rlabs] and

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1332 See *Masters of Meditation*, page 209

1333 For biographical notes on Sakya Paṇḍita Kunga Gyaltshen [sa skya paṇḍita kun dga' rgyal mtshan] (1182-1251) see *mkhas btsun bzang po Vol. X*, 137ff *Luminous Lifes*, pages 159-169.

1334 For biographical information on Lord Tsongkhapa Lobzang Drakpa [rje tsong kha pa blo bzang grags pa] (1357-1419) see *Leben des Tsongkhapa* and *Life of Tsong Khapa*.

1335 For biographical notes on the omniscient Longchen Rabjam [kun mkhyen klong chen rab 'jams] (1308-1363) see *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, pages 575-596; *Buddha Mind*, pages 145-188; *Masters of Meditation*, pages 109-117 and *klong chen rnam thar*.

1336 Devaviṭsiṃha [lha rig pa seng ge / lha rig pa'i seng ge / lha'i rig pa seng ge (?)] was the Sanskrit teacher of Thumi Sambhoṭa from whom he learned Pāṇini's Sanskrit grammar. See *Blue Annals*, page 218 and *History of Buddhism*, page 185.

benefit [phen pa] a buddha continuously bestows upon sentient beings. The sphere of influence of a buddha's activities [phrin las] extends to every sentient being.

There is never even the slightest separation or obstruction between the Buddha and all sentient beings, not even for an instant. The Buddha's blessings are constantly permeating and influencing the minds of all sentient beings, regardless of whether or not they are aware of it. The Buddha's activity constantly serves the happiness and benefit of all beings. This is what is known as the 'hidden' activity of the Buddha. What this actually tells us is that the Buddha is the true cause of happiness [bde ba'i rgyu]. Every manner of happiness that we can possibly experience is a direct blessing of the Buddha. Any circumstance that may occur that leads to happiness [bde ba'i rkyen] is also a direct blessing of the Buddha.

Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī is described as the body manifestation [sku'i rigs] of all the buddhas. In the same way, Bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara is considered the speech manifestation [gsung gi rigs] of all the buddhas, and Bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi is known as the mind manifestation [thugs kyi rigs]. For a buddha, body, speech, and mind are inseparable [sku gsum dbyer med]. A buddha is wisdom only [ye shes 'ba' zhig], not a trace of anything else.

Generally, the term 'body' [sku] refers to the 'aspect of phenomenal appearance' [snang cha]. The term 'speech' [gsung] is the 'resounding aspect' [grags cha]; and 'mind', the aspect which benefits beings, refers to 'power' or 'capacity' [nus pa].

All of these sublime qualities of the buddhas are fully present in Khenpo Kunpal's root guru, Paltrül Orgyen Jigme *Chökyi Wangpo* [chos kyi dbang po]. Khenpo Kunpal's other *venerable masters* [rje btsun bla ma], his other teachers such as Ön Urgyen Tendzin Norbu,[1337] Mipham Rinpoche,[1338] and others are considered to be the *quintessence of all the buddhas* [sangs rgyas kun dgnos]. Khenpo Kunpal prays, *"Reside in the lotus of my heart until I attain the essence of enlightenment,"* thus promising to meditate on his root guru seated upon a lotus in the very center of his heart until he attains complete enlightenment.

Paltrül Orgyen Jigme *Chökyi Wangpo*[1339] lived the life of a vagabond yogin. Considered to be an incarnation of Śāntideva, he was both an excellent scholar and a widely revered meditation master of the Nyingma School. In particular, he was a holder of the renowned and widely practiced Longchen Nyingthig lineage, which he

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1337 Ön Urgyen Tendzin Norbu [dbon urgyen bstan 'dzin nor bu], a nineteenth century scholar, was a student of Paltrül Rinpoche and a nephew [dbon] of Gyalse Zhenphan Thaye [rgyal sras gzhan phan mtha' yas]. For biographical notes on the life of Ön Urgyen Tendzin Norbu see *Masters of Meditation*, pages 226-227.

1338 For data on the life and work of Mipham Rinpoche see *Beacon of Certainty*, pages 19-39; *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, pages 869-880; and *Werke des Mi-pham rnam-rgyal*.

1339 For biographical notes on Paltrül Orgyen Jigme Chökyi Wangpo [dpal sprul u rgyan 'jigs med chos kyi dbang po] (1808-1887) see *Masters of Meditation*, pages 201-210; and *dpal sprul rnam thar*.

received from his root guru Gyalwe Nyugu,[1340] a direct student of Jigme Lingpa.[1341] Paltrül Rinpoche was famous for his great skill in giving oral commentaries on and explanations of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. Khenpo Kunpal had received extensive instructions on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra from Paltrül Rinpoche, as well as from many of his other teachers.

Text section 43:

Here, Khenpo Kunpal cites *his explanations,* literally 'the explanations that I received from him' [gang gi zhal gsung]. This refers to all of the explanations and teachings Khenpo Kunpal received directly from Paltrül Rinpoche. From among Paltrül Rinpoche's complete explanations, which are like *undefiled essential nectar* [zag med bdud rtsi'i bcud], Khenpo Kunpal wrote down *only a fraction* [cha shas] of these in this commentary. For this reason he calls his commentary a mere *composition of letters* [yi ge'i 'du byed]. Khenpo Kunpal thus adopts a posture of humility. *The supreme guru* [bla ma mchog] refers again to Paltrül Rinpoche. Khenpo Kunpal is praying, "Through the blessings of Paltrül Rinpoche and through the blessings of the three jewels, may this commentary *help the doctrine and sentient beings* [bstan pa dang 'gro la sman pa]." *The (three) jewels* [dkon mchog rin po che] are, of course, the Buddha, the dharma, and the saṃgha.

The word 'nectar' [bdud rtsi] is used here as a metaphor to denote the 'nectar of the gods' [lha'i bdud rtsi], which is said to have the power to cure all diseases. The *undefiled essential nectar* [zag med bdud rtsi'i bcud] of Paltrül Rinpoche's teachings has the power to cure the disease of afflictions [nyon mong gi nad]. Khenpo Kunpal makes the aspiration to receive the blessings of his root guru and of the three jewels so that his commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra may *help the doctrine and sentient beings* [bstan pa dang 'gro la sman par byin gyi rlobs]. Thus he ends the metrical preface.

Text section 44:

Now Khenpo Kunpal addresses the buddhas of the three times: *The buddhas of the past* ['das pa'i sangs rgyas] refers to all the buddhas before Buddha Śākyamuni. The most prominent of these is Buddha *Dīpaṃkara* [mar me mdzes]. In the story of the one thousand buddhas of this Fortunate Aeon, the universal monarch Dhṛtarāṣṭra [yul 'khor srung] himself was said to have become the Buddha Dīpaṃkara[1342] in an aeon prior to our own.

1340 For biographical notes on Gyalwe Nyugu [rgyal ba'i nyu gu] (1765-1843) see *Masters of Meditation*, pages 163-178.

1341 For biographical notes on Jigme Lingpa ['jigs med gling pa] see *Masters of Meditation*, pages 118-135.

1342 See *Jewellery of Scripture*, page 116; and *bu ston chos 'byung*, page 57.

The scriptures mention seven buddhas, also called 'the seven heroic buddhas' [sangs rgyas dpa' bo bdun] as well as 'the seven generations of buddhas' [sangs rgyas rabs bdun]. They are: 1) Buddha Vipaśyin,[1343] who appeared in a former aeon when the lifespan of human beings was eighty thousand years; 2) Buddha Śikhin,[1344] who appeared in a former aeon when the lifespan of human beings was seventy thousand years; 3) Buddha Viśvabhukra[1345] appeared in a former aeon when the lifespan of human beings was sixty thousand years; 4) Buddha Krakucchanda,[1346] the first buddha of our aeon, appeared when the lifespan of human beings was forty thousand years; 5) Buddha Kanakamuni,[1347] the second buddha of our aeon, appeared when the lifespan of human beings was thirty thousand years; 6) Buddha Kāśyapa,[1348] the third buddha of our aeon, appeared when the lifespan of human beings was twenty thousand years; 7) Finally, Buddha Śākyamuni,[1349] the fourth buddha of our aeon, appeared when the lifespan of human beings was only one hundred years. The buddhas Vipaśyin, Śikhin, and Viśvabhukra appeared in former aeons and are, therefore, not counted among the thousand buddhas to appear in the Fortunate Aeon.[1350]

The Hīnayāna scriptures tell us that our teacher Buddha Śākyamuni began his spiritual path under the buddha known as the 'Great Buddha Śākyamuni' and served seventy-five thousand buddhas up to the time of Buddha Rāṣṭrapāla.[1351] Over this period Buddha Śākyamuni gathered the accumulations of merit and thus completed the 'first incalculable aeons' [grangs med dang po][1352] of his journey to enlightenment. Then, beginning with Buddha Sādhukara[1353] and continuing to the time of Buddha Indradhvaja,[1354] our teacher further served seventy-six thousand buddhas. This period represents the 'second incalculable aeon' [grangs med gnyis pa] of Śākyamuni's path as a bodhisattva. Then, beginning with the time of Buddha Dīpaṃkara[1355] and continuing on through the time of Buddha Kāśyapa,[1356] our teacher Śākyamuni

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[1343] rnam par gzigs

[1344] gtsug tor can

[1345] thams cad skyob pa

[1346] 'khor ba 'jig

[1347] gser thub

[1348] 'od srung

[1349] shākya thub pa

[1350] For further details see *klong chen chos 'byung*, pages 72-73.

[1351] sangs rgyas yul 'khor skyong

[1352] The term 'incalculable' or 'countless' [grangs med; asaṃkhya] is a number which is described as 'ten to the power of fifty-nine'. See *Jewellery of Scripture*, pages 144-145; *bu ston chos 'byung*, pages 71-72; and *ston pa śākya thub pa'i rnam thar*, page 25.

[1353] sangs rgyas legs mdzad

[1354] sangs rgyas dbang po rgyal mtshan

[1355] sangs rgyas mar me mdzad

[1356] sangs rgyas 'od srung

served seventy-seven thousand buddhas. In this final period, Śākyamuni completed the 'third incalculable aeon' [grangs med gsum pa] of gathering the accumulations. At the time of Buddha Kāśyapa, when the lifespan of human beings was twenty thousand years, our teacher was reborn as a Brāhmaṇa's son called 'Guru' [bram ze khye'u bla ma]. After he passed away, he took rebirth in the Tuṣita heaven as Bodhisattva Śvetaketu [byang chub sems dpa' dam pa tog dkar po] and taught the dharma to the gods. From Tuṣita he emanated into our world system as Buddha Śākyamuni, the fourth buddha of this Fortunate Aeon, and performed the twelve deeds.[1357]

The scriptures also recount that Buddha Śākyamuni principally gathered the accumulation of merit for the first incalculable aeon; that he then proceeded to rise from the first through the seventh bodhisattva levels during the second incalculable aeon; and that he continued from the eighth bodhisattva level all the way up to the level of complete enlightenment [sangs rgyas kyi sa] during the third incalculable aeon.[1358]

Buddha Śākyamuni is the buddha of the present era in our world system. Our world system is only a small part of his total field of activities, which actually covers an entire cosmos of a billion world systems. Outside of this cosmos of a billion world systems, even now innumerable buddhas are still appearing simultaneously in other cosmic universes of a billion world systems. These buddhas likewise share an equally vast activity field and are all referred to as *buddhas of the present* [da ltar gyi sangs rgyas].

The future buddha, who will appear after Buddha Śākyamuni, will be the *venerable Maitreyanātha, great being, the regent of the Victor* [rgyal tshab sems dpa' chen po rje btsun byams pa mgon po]. He and all the buddhas after him are called *buddhas of the future* [ma 'ongs pa'i sangs rgyas]. Together, all of these constitute what are known as the buddhas or *victors of the three times* [dus gsum gyi rgyal ba] of past, present, and future.

With regard to the *precious bodhicitta* [rin chen byang chub kyi sems], this bodhicitta is known as the *great path* [lam po che], which all buddhas of the past have traversed, which all the buddhas of the present travel, and which all the buddhas of the future will traverse on the journey to perfect enlightenment. It is the *sole source* ['byung ba'i gnas gcig pur gyur pa] which gives rise to all possible *accumulations of goodness* [legs

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1357 See *Jewellery of Scripture*, pages 123-124; *bu ston chos 'byung*, pages 61-62; *klong chen chos 'byung*, pages 80-81; and and *ston pa śākya thub pa'i rnam thar*, page 32. The twelve deeds of a Buddha are [sangs rgyas kyi mdzad pa bcu gnyis]: 1) descending from Tushita's heavenly place [dga' ldan nas 'pho ba'i mdzad pa]; 2) entering the womb [lhums su zhugs pa'i mdzad pa]; 3) birth [sku bltams pa'i mdzad pa]; 4) demonstrating his physical prowess [sgyu rtsal bstan pa'i mdzad pa]; 5) enjoying the company of his queen [btsun mo'i 'khor gyis rol pa'i mdzad pa]; 6) leaving home [khyim nas mngon par 'byung ba'i mdzad pa]; 7) undergoing penance [dka' ba spyad pa'i mdzad pa]; 8) realizing the essence of enlightenment [byang chub snying por gshegs pa'i mdzad pa]; 9) defeating the māras [bdud sde 'dul ba'i mdzad pa]; 10) total awakening [mngon par byang chub pa'i mdzad pa]; 11) turning the wheel of dharma [chos kyi 'khor lo bskor ba'i mdzad pa]; and 12) entering into nirvāṇa [mya ngan las 'das pa'i mdzad pa].

1358 See *klong chen chos 'byung*, page 84ff.

tshogs], leading to *welfare and happiness* [phan bde] in saṃsāra ['khor ba] and nirvāṇa [myang 'das], in *worldly existence* [srid pa 'jig rten] and in *peaceful nirvāṇa* [zhi ba myang 'das]. Bodhicitta is the most noble attitude, the ultimate of all motives. Whoever is endowed with bodhicitta will move from one happiness to the next in this and all future lifetimes and is certain to eventually reach perfect enlightenment.

The highest attainment possible for any being is the state of complete enlightenment, buddhahood. The wish that all sentient beings may reach the level of buddhahood is the supreme of all wishes. Wishing that all beings become buddhas means to wish for them the greatest attainment possible for any being. This unexcelled wish is called the most precious bodhicitta; it is most precious because it is directed to the most precious of all achievements, enlightenment.

If one maintains a virtuous attitude yet remains fettered by ego-clinging, this virtuous and positive character will still lead one on to happy conditions within saṃsāra, within the sphere of *worldly existence* [srid pa 'jig rten]. If one maintains a virtuous attitude while also becoming free of ego-clinging [bdag 'dzin] selfishness, one will be able to transcend saṃsāric existence and reach instead the *peaceful state of nirvāṇa* [zhi ba myang 'das], a state free from any suffering. This peaceful state of nirvāṇa corresponds to the realization and attainment of śrāvaka arhats [nyan thos dgra bcom pa] and pratyekabuddhas [rang sangs rgyas]. Both have realized the truth of cessation, and both have ovecome all afflictions [nyon mongs spangs pa'i 'gog bden]. In order to reach perfect enlightenment, however, far more is required than just a positive, virtuous attitude. Complete enlightenment is only possible if one is truly endowed with bodhicitta.

The śrāvakas and prateykabuddhas have reached a state of peace beyond sorrow. Although they have left behind the realms of suffering forever, nonetheless, they have still not arrived at the state of buddhahood. They are unable to reach a state beyond that of 'the mere absence of suffering'. This is only because they still lack the precious bodhicitta. Though their attitude may undoubtedly be beneficial to sentient beings, they themselves have not yet truly generated the precious bodhicitta.

On the śrāvaka and pratyekabuddha path, one trains in the virtuous qualities of loving kindness and compassion while, however, failing to give rise to the precious bodhicitta. Although the qualities of loving kindness and compassion are without any doubt the true basis from which bodhicitta arises, the real meaning of bodhicitta entails much more than merely wishing for all beings to be happy and free from suffering. Bodhicitta is much more profound and powerful; it is the courageous commitment: "I will free all sentient beings from their suffering and establish them all on the level of perfect enlightenment."

In order to fully understand bodhicitta one must understand it in two ways: in its aspect of compassion [snying rje] and in its aspect of knowledge [shes rab]. What is the special compassion unique to the bodhicitta motivation? With compassion one focuses on benefiting others [snying rjes gzhan don la dmigs pa] through the steadfast resolve: "I

will free all beings from suffering." This is the compassion aspect of the bodhicitta motivation.

What, then, is the knowledge aspect of the bodhicitta motivation? With knowledge one is focused on perfect enlightenment [shes rab kyis rdzogs byang la dmigs pa] through the similar resolve: "I will establish all sentient beings on the level of perfect enlightenment."

The bodhisattvas aspire to reach the state of buddhahood, perfect enlightenment, and, in addition, are fully committed to themselves establishing all sentient beings on the very same level. The personal aspiration to become an arhat or pratyekabuddha requires no involvement with the bodhicitta motivation whatsoever. Bodhicitta is, in fact, exactly the opposite of any self-oriented motive. Thus, through bodhicitta, one is able to overcome every conceivable form of ego-clinging.

The Buddha teaches that *goodness* [legs pa] must necessarily spring from a virtuous source [rgyu bzang po]; the supreme source of all goodness is the precious bodhicitta. The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is principally concerned with instructing us in the ways of this precious bodhicitta. The precious bodhicitta is praised as being far more valuable than even the *wish-fulfilling jewel, king of powers* [yid bzhin nor bu dbang gi rgyal po]. How can this be so? Quite simply, the powerful wish-fulfilling jewel may be able to grant any material wish a sentient being might have, but it is completely unable to grant the state of enlightenment. Like the wish-fulfilling jewel, the precious bodhicitta fulfills all relative wishes; moreover, it alone can lead to the ultimate happiness, to the attainment of complete and perfect enlightenment.

Text Section 48-49:

Here Khenpo Kunpal mentions that a buddha teaches in *three types of miraculous displays* [cho 'phrul rnam pa gsum]: through his body, speech, and mind. The powerful miraculous displays [cho 'phrul / nus pa'i 'phrul] performed by a buddha differ significantly from the magical displays [rdzu 'phrul / rdzun ma'i 'phrul] performed by an arhat. The miraculous displays of a buddha greatly surpass the magical displays of an arhat. At the beginning of a teaching a buddha sits in silence for a short period of time and then sends forth manifold light rays from the curled hair between his eyebrows, from his mouth, or from the center of his heart.

In the Mahāyāna sūtras such as the Ratna-kūṭa and the Avataṃsaka, many individual light rays emanating from the Buddha are described in detail; hundreds of different light rays are mentioned by name. The light rays penetrate and pervade one billion world systems—'the third order of a thousand world systems'[1359]—the entirety of

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[1359] The term 'third order of thousand (world systems)' [stong gsum], often translated as 'three thousand-fold world systems', means 1.000 to the power of three, which equals one billion single world systems. One single world system ['jig rten gyi khams] includes Mount Sumeru, sun and moon, the four continents, the worlds of the gods of desire and the world of Brahmā. The sum of 'a thousand single world systems' is called 'the first order of a thousand world

which is the activity realm of one single buddha. These light rays emanated by the Buddha invite all beings within one billion world systems who, through former karma or aspirations, have a connection with the Buddha.

In this way, in preparation for giving a particular teaching, the Buddha would send out light rays, gathering all beings yet to be included into his entourage. Sometimes the Buddha's light rays reach directly to a particular place in order to gather specific beings into his assembly. At other times, infinite light rays spiral through a myriad of entire universes to summon all appropriate beings dwelling there into the Buddha's presence. This is the miraculous display of the magical power of the Buddha's body when he teaches the dharma.

Once the audience has been gathered, the Buddha performs a miracle with his tongue, inspiring faith [dad pa] and trust [yid ches] in the newly gathered audience. It is said that his tongue covers a trichiliocosm—one billion world systems—in an inconceivable way. This is one aspect of the miraculous display of magical powers stemming from the infinite qualities of the Buddha's speech. The Buddha gained these infinite qualities of speech through the practice of abandoning lying for countless aeons, rebirth upon rebirth, as he traversed the bodhisattva path.

In general, the Buddha is endowed with thirty-two major marks and eighty minor signs. The most precious of all the marks and signs is the major mark of Buddha's speech endowed with the sixty aspects.

The following example well illustrates the unfathomable degree of merit represented by the Buddha's speech.[1360] If one were to combine the total accumulation of merit of every single ordinary sentient being, as well as that of all śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, and then were to further multiply this by ten, proportionally this would still equal only the minute degree of merit contained in but a single hair in a single pore [ba spu'i khung bu gicg] on the surface of the Buddha's body. If one were in turn to combine the total accumulation of merit contained within all such pore hairs

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systems' [stong dang po / stong dang po'i jig rten gyi khams / stong spyi phud kyi 'jig rten gyi khams] or 'the lesser order of a thousand world systems' [stong chung ngu'i 'jig rten gyi khams], which means 1.000 to the power of one.

One thousand 'lesser order of a thousand world systems' constitute 'the middle order of a thousand world systems' [stong bar ma'i 'jig rten gyi khams] or 'the second order of a thousand world systems' [stong gnyis pa; skr. dvi-sāhasra / stong gnyis pa'i jig rten gyi khams], which means a thousand to the power of two or one million separate world systems.

One thousand 'middle order of a thousand world systems' make 'the large order of a thousand world systems' [stong chen po'i 'jig rten gyi khams] or 'the third order of a thousand world systems' [stong gsum pa; tri-sāhasra], also called 'the third order, the larger order of one thousand world systems' [stong gsum gyi stong chen po'i 'jig rten gyi khams; skr. tri-sāhasra-mahāsāhasro loka-dhātuḥ], which means a thousand to the power of three or one billion separate word systems—a trichiliocosm. For further details see *Buddhist Cosmology*, *Illuminator, Myriad Worlds*; and *Prince Jiṇ-Gim's Textbook.*

1360 See *mi pham mkhas 'jug*, pages 329-330 and *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III*, pages 246-249.

found on the Buddha's body and were to multiply this by one hundred, then this would represent the enormous scale of merit necessary to manifest just one of the eighty minor signs [dpe byad] found on the body of the fully enlightened Buddha.

Were one then to again add up the total accumulation of merit represented by all of the Buddha's eighty minor signs taken together and were then to further multiply that by one thousand, this would illustrate the tremendous scale of merit required to manifest any one of the thirty-two major marks [mtshan], except for the *curled hair between his eyebrows* [smin mtshams kyi mdzod dzod spu], the uṣṇīṣa [gtsug tor], and the dharma conch [chos dung].

Leaving aside these three final marks, if one were to combine the accumulation of merit that represents the other twenty-nine marks and multiply this by ten thousand, only then would there be the sufficient accumulation of merit necessary to manifest the curled hair between the Buddha's eyebrows. If we again multiply the merit contained in the curled hair between the Buddha's eyebrows by one hundred thousand, only then would there be a degree of merit sufficient to manifest the uṣṇīṣa which appears at the top of the Buddha's head. Finally, it would be necessary to multiply all the merit contained within the uṣṇīṣa by one trillion to accumulate the prodigious degree of merit necessary to manifest the dharma conch, which actually refers to the voice or speech of the Buddha.

In general, each and every sentient being can comprehend and understand the Buddha's speech. All the words the Buddha speaks resound in the particular language of each being who hears him. What the Buddha teaches exactly accords with the state of mind and capacities of each listener. Whatever he says is clear, pleasant, soft, inspiring, and so on. Thus, the Buddha's voice is lauded as 'one voice with an ocean of facets' [gsung gcig la yan lag rgya mtsho].

As the body of the fully enlightened Buddha is endowed with perfection, whatever he does—whether walking, sitting, lying down, strolling, and even down to the slightest movement of one fine hair in a pore of his skin—will always benefit beings. It is taught that the Buddha himself is always in perfect harmony with the character [khams], capacities [dbang], and thoughts [bsam pa] of whoever beholds him.

For all other beings, the Buddha's mind can only be spoken of inferentially, indirectly, through deductive reasoning [rjes dpag]. No one other than another buddha can directly [mngon sum] comprehend the Buddha's mind. As Buddha Śākyamuni said, "Except for me or those like me, beings should not fathom beings" [nga dang nga 'dra ba ma gtogs gang zag gi tshod gang zag gis bzung ba mi bya'o]. This statement means: except for Śākyamuni, or those like him who have attained buddhahood, ordinary beings should not try to fathom the spiritual level of other beings, let alone attempt to discern the mind of a buddha.

In the *Damamāko-sūtra* [mdo 'dzangs blun], the Buddha compared practitioners to the fruit of the mango tree:[1361]

1) Some practitioners are like mango fruits that are ripe on the outside but are not ripe on the inside [amra'i 'bras bu phyi rol smin la nang ma smin pa dang 'dra]. Some practitioners may externally appear to be exemplary monks or bodhisattvas, when, in fact, they are ridden with afflictions inside.

2) Some practitioners are like mango fruits that are ripe on the inside but have not yet ripened on the outside [amra'i 'bras bu nang smin la phyi rol ma smin pa dang 'dra ba]. Such practitioners will appear to be quite ordinary when they are in truth great bodhisattvas, endowed with immeasurable qualities. Such was the case with Śāntideva.

3) Some practitioners are, on the other hand, likened to mango fruits that are neither ripe on the inside nor the outside [amra'i 'bras bu phyi rol kyang ma smin la nang yang ma smin pa dang 'dra ba]. These are pseudo-practitioners, who outwardly display coarse behavior full of character defects while inwardly being overwhelmed with a gamut of afflictions such as aggression, jealousy, greed, and so forth. These 'practitioners' do not really look like practitioners, and, in fact, they are not.

4) Finally, some practitioners are like mango fruits that have ripened both on the inside and on the outside [amra'i 'bras bu phyi nang gnyis ka smin pa dang 'dra ba]. Such is the case with great masters like Milarepa or Longchenpa. Outwardly, they live a life of impeccable virtue, abiding in the discipline and conduct of a monk or a bodhisattva. Internally, such masters are endowed with immense qualities of discipline, samādhi, and knowledge. As they are perfect in their conduct and in their qualities, people automatically revere them.

This illustrates that, having no means to judge other practitioners or to fathom the level of practice any other being may have reached, we should not judge others at all. Simply practicing pure perception [dag snang] toward them is far better.

Text section 50:

Here, Khenpo Kunpal continues introducing the qualities of the fully enlightened Buddha. The Buddha's mind is utterly impartial, free of any subjective judgement or bias. The Buddha perceives not the slightest difference between a demon and a god, between a faithless person and the most devout. The Buddha's mind knows everything, whether near to him or far from him. The Buddha always directly knows what every single being is doing, saying, and thinking at any given moment of time throughout the past, present, and future. Thus, when it is said that the Buddha is omniscient, this is literally true.

[1361] See *mdzangs blun*, story 16, dge tshul gyis tshul khrims bsrungs pa'i le'u, pages 153-154; *Nāgārjuna's Letter*, page 46.

The Buddha is endowed with the *miraculous display of an all-communicating mind* [thugs kun tu brjod pa'i cho 'phrul]. The Buddha manifests a miraculous display through his body, his voice, and his mind. The miraculous display of his body and voice appears through form and color, as for instance his tongue displaying emanations of multi-colored rainbows. Through the all-communicating miraculous display of the Buddha's mind, he knows the outer as well as the inner conditions of the bodies and the minds of all sentient beings without exception.

When he teaches, Buddha presents the dharma in a way that precisely accords with the *minds* [blo], *capacities* [dbang po], as well as all of the *latent tendencies* [bag la nyal ba] of each person present in his audience. Beings are classed as having high, average, or lesser capacities to understand the dharma, and Buddha is able to teach the dharma in a manner that corresponds exactly to each being's state of mind. Although those who constitute his audience are beings of vastly differing capacities, yet in the course of a single teaching session the Buddha can simultaneously guide each of those present in a manner appropriate to their level of understanding.

People's various mindsets and mental capacities [blo] are the direct result of the merit they may or may not have accumulated in former lifetimes. When we speak of the individual *capacities* [dbang po] unique to a particular person, this refers to the degree to which he possesses any of these following five capacities [dbang po lnga]: 1) the capacity of faith [dad pa'i dbang po], 2) the capacity of diligence [brtson 'grus kyi dbang po], 3) the capacity of remembering [dran pa'i dbang po], 4) the capacity of meditation [ting nge 'dzin gyi dbang po], and 5) the capacity of knowledge [shes rab kyi dbang po].

Taken together, these five capacities enable an individual to truly practice virtue [dge ba sgrub pa'i dbang po]. Being endowed with these five capacities is no small accomplishment. Their presence in oneself indicates that one has practiced extensively in former lifetimes. For example, through the power of practicing meditation in former lifetimes, it is possible that one could realize the dharmakāya at the very moment one hears the Buddha's teachings, or even at a moment of merely remembering the Buddha. On the other hand, a person of lesser capacities will require a far longer period of time to gain such realization and will be liberated from the cycle of rebirth only gradually. The term *capacity* is also used to refer, in a general way, to a person's 'physical and mental condition' [lus sems kyi dbang po], particularly when speaking of the condition of his five sense organs [dbang po lnga].[1362]

Even a tiny insect will benefit to some degree from hearing the Buddha teach. In contrast, beings with impaired sense organs, such as the deaf or the blind, will as a consequence be unable to perceive various aspects of the Buddha's miraculous displays of body, speech, and mind. This obstruction of the sense faculties results from

1362 The five sense organs [dbang po lnga; skr. pañcendriya] are 1) eye [mig gi dbang po; skr. cakṣurindriya], 2) ear [rna ba'i dbang po; skr. śrotrendriya], 3) nose [sna'i dbang po; skr. ghrāṇendriya], 4) tongue [lce'i dbang po; skr. jihvendriya] and 5) body [lus kyi dbang po; skr. kāyendriya].

a previous accumulation of negative deeds. It is said that the more acutely developed a being's sense organs are, the better will that being be able to absorb the Buddha's teachings.

What are the *latent tendencies* [bar la nyal] Khenpo Kunpal mentions here? Latent tendencies means 'hidden tendencies', because latent tendencies are highly deceptive. Latent tendencies function as a hidden agenda ['gog gyur gyi chos] that both oneself and others generally tend to be unaware of. It often happens, for example, that a person's mind may be dominated by desire while expressing itself outwardly through anger ['dod chags la gnas ste zhe sdang la 'gyur ba]. Conversely, a person's mind may be dominated by anger and aggression and appear outwardly full of desire.

All this illustrates how a person's latent tendencies often differ from their outward conduct. Such tendencies are frequently so deceptive that you can easily fail to observe them in yourself. Similarly, you can easily note that you sometimes have no idea what compels you to behave and to react in certain ways. Your habitual patterns [bag chags], both positive and negative, may be quite obvious to others while remaining completely hidden from yourself. It also happens that when you appear to be expressing positive qualities, hidden negative tendencies and behavior patterns may be hiding in the shadows of your being.

In contrast to these types of obscurations which sentient beings possess, the Buddha knows perfectly all the mental and physical dispositions, capacities, and latent tendencies of those in his audience. He clearly sees each being's hidden agenda; nothing can be hidden from the Buddha's wisdom mind.

In a single teaching, Buddha elucidates many vehicles [theg pa, skr. yāna] of the dharma to many types of beings. The Buddha never expounds the Hīnayāna teachings separately to an audience of lesser capacity, moving on to expound the Mahāyāna teachings to another audience of intermediate capacity, before finally presenting the Vajrayāna teachings to an audience of the highest capacity.

A further profound quality of the Buddha is that he is at no time in any way separated from all sentient beings [kha bral rgyu med]. This is because the wisdom mind of the perfectly enlightened Buddha permeates the minds of all sentient beings throughout the three times, not excluding a single one. This is the result of having fully realized buddha nature [bde bar gshegs pa'i snying po].

In fact, the dualistic minds [sems] of sentient beings have never for an instant been separated from their own inherent buddha nature. Buddha nature is the very essence of the dualistic mind. The Buddha is one in whom the direct realization of the buddha nature is fully awakened. The Buddha's activity is to awaken this realization of the buddha nature within the experience of all sentient beings. This inevitable function of the enlightened state means that as long as sentient beings exist in any of the infinite world systems, buddhas will definitely continue to manifest on their behalf.

While the qualities of the Buddha's body, speech, and mind are inconceivable to the minds of beings, for their sake his teachings appear in their minds through the medium of words and letters. The individual listener's capacity is the only thing that

ever limits the potential impact of the Buddha's teaching. As one might imagine, a tenth level bodhisattva will undoubtedly perceive a different depth of meaning in the Buddha's teaching than will an ordinary person. Thus, it is said the same teaching will be perceived on many different levels by different members of the Buddha's audience.

In general, there are two ways of listening to the Buddha's teachings. First is to try to understand the words [tshig] and their meaning [don]. Secondly, and more important, is to try to understand how these teachings can actually benefit one's own mind, how they can be applied to one's mind and thus transform it.

An example of the first way of listening is that of a rich person who simply counts his money. The example of the second way of listening is that of a person who ponders how to use his money for some beneficial purpose. This helps us understand that the first style of learning characterizes pedantic scholars and intellectuals [rtog ge ba], while the latter is that of the genuine practitioner. The teachings of the Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism emphasize that the second manner of listening must be applied when receiving oral instructions [man ngag] from a master.

The Buddha performs miraculous displays in order to instill faith and trust in the minds of his audience. Only when faith and trust have developed can one really listen to the teachings with a properly attentive and suitably open mind. Merely listening to the teachings without faith and trust will inevitably cause many important elements of the teachings to remain hidden.

Text section 51:

Now we come to another sublime quality of the Buddha, the *miraculous display of universally-corresponding speech* [gsung rjes su mthun pa'i cho 'phrul]. What this means is that the speech of the Buddha resounds in the mind of each of his listeners in their respective languages. Thus, the nāgas will perceive the Buddha's teachings in nāga language, the gods in the language of the gods, and humans in their own particular language or dialect.

Those who prefer a high-pitched voice will hear the Buddha's voice in that way, while those who prefer a low tone will hear the Buddha's voice resonate according to their preference. The Buddha never needs a translator since he communicates directly with each being according to that being's culture, language, capacities, and needs.

The main point here is that the Buddha always teaches the dharma in whatever way is appropriate to the unique needs of beings [gang la gang 'dul ba'i chos]. Echoing this, the Tibetan master Gorampa described the Buddha's speech thus: "Sounds, words, and letters appear in the individual mind-streams of the audience due to the conditional basis of the Buddha's presence" [bdag rkyen sangs rgyas la brten te gdul bya'i de nyid gyi blo sgra tshig yi ge'i rnam par snang ba'o]. This means that based on the wisdom power [ye shes kyi nus pa] of the Buddha, which is the conditional basis [bdag rkyen 'am rgyu], the appropriate sounds, words, and letters of the dharma naturally appear in the mind of each individual member of his audience [gdul bya'i de nyid gyi blo / so so'i sems]. The moment beings come into the Buddha's presence, the dharma arises spontaneously in

their minds. This does not result from any effort on the Buddha's part; the dharma simply manifests naturally in the mind-stream of any being included within his audience.

Furthermore, when people meet the Buddha, he always appears to be facing each member of the audience [sangs rgyas kun tu zhal] from their individual perspective. Even if the people are gathered all around the Buddha, each person will perceive himself to be sitting right in front of the Buddha. This is because the Buddha appears according to the wishes and expectations [re mos ltar tu] of each person who approaches him. Hence, to be accurate, if an individual wanted to see the face of the Buddha, he would see his face; by the same token, if someone wanted to see the Buddha from the back, he would definitely do so. Due to the unusual fact that the Buddha communicates with various beings on multiple levels simultaneously, different accounts of the Buddha's life and teachings have come down to us.

Even the most ordinary being could see a glowing halo of light surrounding the Buddha's body. However, some beings did at times perceive the Buddha to be ill or aging. This impression was nothing more than those beings' obscured or impure perception. The Buddha, as he is understood in the Mahāyāna tradition, is utterly unchanging wisdom [mchog tu mi 'gyur ba'i ye shes]. Mahāyāna practitioners never view the Buddha as a physical body subject to disease and aging. Whatever changes are perceived in the Buddha take place only in the viewer's subjective perception; the wisdom body of the Buddha is never subject to any kind of change.

Furthermore, the Buddha appears only due to his own aspirations coupled with the fortunate karma and aspirations of sentient beings. This mere appearance [snang ba] of the Buddha as it occurs in the minds of beings is not the 'Buddha' that Mahāyāna teachings refer to. Rather, what the Mahāyāna considers to be the Buddha is utterly unchanging wisdom. This wisdom is the 'basis for his appearance' [snang gzhi] in the perception of beings. The Buddha's appearance in the mind of an ordinary being is the personal mental perception [blo / sems] of that being. This is because the 'true Buddha' is beyond the reach of conceptual mind [sangs rgyas blo yi spyod yul min]. Conceptual mind is always understood to be delusion [blo ni 'khrul pa yin par 'dod]. Hence, whatever a deluded mind perceives, even the appearance of the Buddha, must be understood to be deluded perception ['khrul pa'i blo la gang snang ba 'di ni 'khrul snang shes su 'gyur].

Again, the causes for the Buddha to appear within the deluded perception of beings are the auspicious coincidence of the Buddha's immeasurable aspirations in conjunction with the personal virtue, merit, and aspirations of deluded beings. If beings lack the substantial causal factor of merit resulting from virtuous karma [rgyu bsod nams dge ba'i las], they will be unable to perceive the Buddha under any circumstances. Since the Buddha always appears in a manner precisely corresponding to the individual capacities and latent tendencies of each being, all beings will therefore have a different perception of the Buddha, unique to themselves. A bodhisattva on the second bodhisattva level will experience an entirely different impression of the Buddha than will a bodhisattva on the first bodhisattva level.

Nevertheless, all practitioners of the buddha dharma are said to be able to perceive the dharmakāya of the Buddha: "Even after a buddha has entered into nirvāṇa, whoever studies, contemplates, and meditates on the sublime dharma will perceive the dharmakāya of the Buddha." In this statement the term 'dharmakāya' connotes 'dharma', the teachings of the Buddha.

When the Buddha taught at a certain time, in a certain place, to a particular audience, although many disciples were present at the same teaching, some received and understood a teaching of the Hīnayāna vehicle, while others heard a Mahāyāna teaching, and some even a Vajrayāna teaching. This clearly illustrates how the Buddha, through the inconceivable qualities of his body, speech, and mind, is able to turn all three wheels of the dharma simultaneously.

One should never think that the Buddha is in any way comparable to ordinary human beings. From the Mahāyāna point of view, the most important thing to understand when considering the Buddha is that the Buddha is wisdom [ye shes]. The Buddha is entirely wisdom with a wisdom body, a wisdom voice, and a wisdom mind. Buddha is synonymous with wisdom, and there is no true wisdom other than the Buddha.

The fully enlightened Buddha has completely transcended fixating on a self [bdag 'dzin] and is consequently free from all afflictions [nyon mongs; kleśa]. Afflictions arise only out of clinging to and grasping at a 'self'.

The Buddha teaches that six principal afflictions affect the mind-streams of sentient beings. Whichever of these emotions predominates at a given time determines in which of the six realms of saṃsāra a being will be reborn. Human beings mainly [gtso bor] fixate upon desire ['dod chags kyi bdag 'dzin]. Celestial beings fixate on pride [nga rgyal gyi bdag 'dzin]; asuras fixate on jealousy [phrag dog gi bdag 'dzin]; pretas on stinginess [ser sna]; animals on dull stupidity [gti mug gi bdag 'dzin]; and beings of the hell realms on anger [zhe sdang gi bdag 'dzin].

As mentioned, the Buddha's qualties appear in the form of specific marks and signs, due to his vast accumulation of merit during three incalculable aeons of endeavoring in the six transcendental perfections. The details of the marks and signs can be quite useful for a practitioner to know. For example, in the tradition of Mipham Rinpoche, when practicing a sādhana of Buddha Śākyamuni, one meditates specifically on the individual marks and signs in order to give rise to special qualities of samadhi, meditative absorption. For more details see 'The White Lotus',[1363] Mipham Rinpoche's commentary on his Buddha Śākyamuni sādhana.

The thirty-two excellent marks [mtshan bzang po gsum cu rtsa gnyis] of a perfectly enlightened buddha are:[1364]

1. Buddha's palms and soles are marked with a thousand-spoked wheel.

1363 See *rgyab chos padma dkar po.*

1364 See *mi pham mkhas 'jug*, page 322ff and *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III.*, pages 239-242.

2. Buddha's soles are flat and even.
3. Buddha has webbing in the spaces between his fingers and toes.
4. Buddha's hands and feet are soft and tender.
5. Buddha's body has raised surfaces at seven places: the backs of the hands and feet, on both shoulders, and the back of his head.
6. Buddha's fingers and toes are fine and long.
7. Buddha's heels are wide and round.
8. Buddha's body is tall and upright.
9. Buddha's ankle bones and kneecaps do not protrude.
10. Buddha's body hair grows upwards.
11. Buddha's lower legs are round and full.
12. Buddha's arms are long and beautiful, reaching to his knees.
13. Buddha's penis is completely recessed.
14. Buddha's skin is like the color of gold, pure, fair, and shining attractively.
15. Buddha's skin is thin and soft.
16. Buddha's body hairs are fine and soft, and they curl clockwise.
17. Buddha has one curled hair between his eyebrows which is white, soft, tender, and which curls clockwise.
18. Buddha's upper body is broad like that of a lion.
19. Buddha's shoulders are rounded.
20. Buddha's back is smooth, with no indentation between the shoulder blades.
21. Buddha's tongue has the quality of being able to experience whatever he tastes as sublimely flavored.
22. Buddha's body is symmetrical like a banyan tree; the height of his body is equal to the span of his outstretched arms.
23. Buddha has a protuberance on his head, the uṣṇīṣa, which is round, black, and curled clockwise. It radiates such intense light that it cannot be gazed upon.
24. Buddha's tongue is long and beautiful and can reach every part of his face.
25. Buddha's voice has the sixty aspects of the melodious speech of Brahma.
26. Buddha's two jaws are beautiful, round, and full like the jaws of a lion.
27. Buddha's teeth are completely white.
28. Buddha's teeth are of equal length and width.
29. Buddha's rows of teeth are beautiful, with no space in between (the teeth).

30. Buddha has forty teeth, twenty above and twenty below.
31. Buddha's eyes are beautifully blue like a jewel and have the following properties: 1) his pupils are black, 2) his eyeballs are white, 3) the corners of his eyes have a red hue, 4) his irises are blue on the periphery and yellow at the center.
32. Buddha's upper and lower eyelashes are individually distinct.

The eighty minor signs [dpe byad brgyad cu] are:[1365]

The three signs of his nails, hands, and feet are:

1. Buddha's nails are reddish like the color of copper.
2. Buddha's nails are shiny.
3. Buddha's nails are raised in the center, being neither flat nor indented.

The three signs of his fingers are:

4. Buddha's fingers are round.
5. Buddha's fingers are wide.
6. Buddha's fingers are tapered.

The two signs of his veins are:

7. Buddha's veins are not visible.
8. Buddha's veins are not knotted.

The three signs of his feet are:

9. Buddha's ankle bones are not visible.
10. Buddha's feet are equal in size.
11. Buddha's stride is equidistant.

The seven signs of his manner of walking are:

12. Buddha walks like a lion, outshining all human beings.
13. Buddha walks like an elephant, outshining all nāga beings.
14. Buddha walks like a flying swan.
15. Buddha walks like a leader who conducts his entourage wherever he desires.
16. Buddha walks naturally to the right when circumambulating and he always keeps others to his right.

[1365] See *mi pham mkhas 'jug*, page 326ff and *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III.*, pages 242-245

17. Buddha's walk is beautiful and appealing.
18. Buddha walks upright, not bent over.

The three signs of his head are:

19. Buddha's head is round and wide like an umbrella.
20. Buddha's hairline is well-distinguished.
21. Buddha's forehead is large and wide.

The six signs of his hair are:

22. Buddha's hair is black.
23. Buddha's hair is beautiful.
24. Buddha's hair is soft.
25. Buddha's hair does not hang down in a disheveled fashion.
26. Buddha's hair is neither shaggy nor coarse.
27. Buddha's hair is fragrant.

The five signs of his eyes are:

28. Buddha's eyes are elongated and open.
29. Buddha's eyes are beautiful, the white and black parts being clearly distinct from one another.
30. Buddha's eyes are flawless, without any defect of irregular lines.
31. Buddha's eyes are utterly clear, giving no impairement to his vision.
32. Buddha's eyes are attractive, with beautiful eyelashes.

The four signs of his eyebrows are:

33. Buddha's eyebrows are long.
34. Buddha's eyebrows have soft hairs.
35. Buddha's eyebrows have a sheen.
36. Buddha's eyebrows have hairs of uniform length.

The two signs of his ears are:

37. Buddha's ears are of equal length and size.
38. Buddha's hearing capacity never declines.

The two signs of his nose are:

39. Buddha's nose is prominent.

40. Buddha's nose is perfectly clean.

The two signs of his face are:

41. Buddha's face is well-proportioned.
42. Buddha's lips are red and clear.

The three signs of his tongue are:

43. Buddha's tongue is flexible.
44. Buddha's tongue is thin.
45. Buddha's tongue is red.

The five signs of his teeth are:

46. Buddha's corner teeth are round.
47. Buddha's teeth are sharp.
48. Buddha's teeth are white.
49. Buddha's teeth are of equal size.
50. Buddha's teeth are tapered.

The two signs of his voice are:

51. Buddha's voice is charismatic.
52. Buddha's voice is gentle and soft, without any stuttering.

The two signs of his hands are:

53. Buddha's hands are long and wide.
54. Buddha's hands are soft.

The three signs of lines on his palms are:

55. Buddha's palm lines are clear and radiant.
56. Buddha's palm lines are deeply engraved.
57. Buddha's palm lines are long and unbroken.

The ten general signs of his physical qualities are:

58. Buddha's body moves with the right measure of flexibility and grace.
59. Buddha's body is well-proportioned, being neither too tall nor too short, neither too fat nor too thin.
60. Buddha's body possesses all the thirty-two marks clearly and perfectly.

61. Buddha's body possesses long and beautiful limbs, as he is tall.
62. Buddha's body is very youthful.
63. Buddha's body is soft, without the faintest blemishes.
64. Buddha's body is not impaired by defects such as thinness.
65. Buddha's body is fully-fleshed.
66. Buddha's body is not slack, but composed.
67. Buddha's body has clear distinctions, because his physical components are well-proportioned.

The four signs that indicate the qualities of his flawless body are:

68. Buddha's body has no moles or blackheads.
69. Buddha's body is utterly pure, without any trace of unattractiveness.
70. Buddha's body is free of stains such as eye secretions, tooth plaque, and the like.
71. Buddha's body is naturally clean, even without bathing.

The four signs of his lower body are:

72. Buddha's waist is round, including his buttocks and hips.
73. Buddha's small waist accentuates his body.
74. Buddha's waist is not elongated.
75. Buddha's belly is even, without any distinction of upper and lower.

The two signs of his belly are:

76. Buddha's navel is deeply recessed.
77. Buddha's navel coils clockwise.

The three signs that indicate the qualities of his general conduct are:

78. Buddha's conduct in body, speech, and mind is pure.
79. Buddha's behavior is always pleasant to see.
80. Buddha attracts every person who merely sees the eighty signs or auspicious designs on his body.

In addition to the thirty-two major marks and the eighty minor signs are also the 'eighty auspicious designs' [bkra shis kyi ri mo] that are displayed upon the Buddha's body. These include the knot of infinity [dpal be'u], the curling swastika [g.yung drung 'khyil ba], the square [gru bzhi pa], the vajra [rdo rje], the lotus [pad ma], the conch shell [dung], the horse [rta], the streamers [ba dan], and so forth.

Through the course of his previous lifetimes, Śākyamuni Buddha totally abandoned the four non-virtuous actions of speech: lying, sowing discord, harsh speech, and worthless chatter. Throughout his path as a bodhisattva, Śākyamuni always spoke the truth, never failed to sow seeds of harmony rather than discord, was soft and gentle in speech and never harsh or hostile, and always spoke meaningful words rather than frivolous, idle chatter. As a result of his ceaseless practice of virtuous speech, the Buddha attained the 'melodious speech endowed with sixty aspects' [gsung dbyangs yan lag drug bcu]. These sixty qualities of the Buddha's speech far transcend and outshine even the speech of the supreme god, Brahma, whose speech is also said to be endowed with sixty aspects.

The sixty aspects of the Buddha's speech:[1366]

1. Buddha's speech is inspiring [mnyen pa], instigating roots of virtue in all sentient beings who hear him.
2. Buddha's speech is soft ['jam pa], causing bliss when heard.
3. Buddha's speech is appealing [yid du 'ong ba], teaching what to adopt and what to avoid.
4. Buddha's speech is attractive [yid du 'thad pa], as his pronunciation is perfect.
5. Buddha's speech is pure [dag pa], as his motivation is virtuous.
6. Buddha's speech is flawless [dri ma med pa], as his motivation is free from afflictions.
7. Buddha's speech is articulate [gsal ba], as his words and syllables are clearly enunciated.
8. Buddha's speech is captivating [snyan la 'jebs pa], dispelling wrong views.
9. Buddha's speech is worthy [mnyan par 'os pa], showing the method of renunciation.
10. Buddha's speech is indomitable [mi tshugs pa], dispelling improper talk.
11. Buddha's speech is pleasant [snyan pa], generating a joyous state of mind in the listener.
12. Buddha's speech is calming ['dul ba], showing the remedy for attachment.
13. Buddha's speech is refined [mi rtsub pa], being neither exhausting nor tiresome.
14. Buddha's speech is not coarse [mi brlang ba], pleasantly teaching how to avoid mistakes.
15. Buddha's speech is extremely taming [rab du dul ba], as he teaches the three vehicles.

[1366] See *mi pham mkhas 'jug*, page 330ff and *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III.*, pages 246-249.

16. Buddha's speech is appropriate [rna bar snyan pa], as it dispels obstacles and distraction.
17. Buddha's speech brings satisfaction to the body [lus tshim par byed pa] due to his pure śamathā and vipaśyanā.
18. Buddha's speech brings satisfaction to the mind [sems tshim par byed pa] due to his pure śamathā [zhi gnas] and vipaśyanā [lhag mthong].
19. Buddha's speech is delightful [snying dga' bar byed pa], dispelling doubts.
20. Buddha's speech creates happiness [dga' bde skyed pa], dispelling wrong views and uncertainty.
21. Buddha's speech is without sorrow [gdung ba med pa], freeing from regrets.
22. Buddha's speech facilitates insight [kun shes pa], generating perfect knowledge when heard.
23. Buddha's speech is comprehensible [rnam par rig par bya ba], supporting perfect knowledge through reflection.
24. Buddha's speech is illuminating [rnam par gsal ba], as he teaches without being secretive.
25. Buddha's speech generates joy [dga' bar byed pa], as it amplifies the qualities one has already attained.
26. Buddha's speech is utterly enjoyable [mngon par dga' bar bya ba], as it generates qualities one has not previously attained.
27. Buddha's speech brings comprehension [kun shes par byed pa], as he teaches in a profound manner.
28. Buddha's speech leads to full understanding [rnam par rig par byed pa], as he teaches extensively.
29. Buddha's speech is reasonable [rigs pa], as he speaks logically.
30. Buddha's speech is relevant ['brel ba], as he connects to the minds of beings when he teaches.
31. Buddha's speech is not repetitive [ma zlos pa], as it is free from the flaw of repeating something in the same way.
32. Buddha's speech is like the roar of a lion [seng ge'i dbyangs], as it brings fear to those who come to argue with him.
33. Buddha's speech is like the sound of an elephant [glang po che'i dbyangs], as it reaches his entire entourage.
34. Buddha's speech is like the sound of a dragon ['brug gi sgra dbyangs], as it possesses a deep resonance.

35. Buddha's speech is like the voice of the nāga king [klu dbang gi dbyangs], as it is not contentious and it is worth remembering.
36. Buddha's speech is like the voice of the gandharvas [dri za'i sgra dbyangs], as it is pleasant and captivating.
37. Buddha's speech is like the song of the kalapinga bird [ka la ping ka'i dbyangs], as it is fluent, understandable, devastating and undefeatable in debate.
38. Buddha's speech is like the melodious voice of Brahma [tshangs pa'i dbyangs], resounding far into the distance.
39. Buddha's speech is like the auspicious song of the shangshang bird [shang shang te'u'i dbyangs], transforming every undertaking into an auspicious omen.
40. Buddha's speech is like the voice of Devendra[1367] [lha dbang gi dbyangs], as his words are noble.
41. Buddha's speech is like the sound of celestial drum [lha'i rnga bo che'i sgra lta bu], as it is victorious over all māras.
42. Buddha's speech is not boastful [ma khengs pa], as he is without afflictions even when praised.
43. Buddha's speech is not crushed [mi dma' ba] when he is slandered.
44. Buddha's speech is correct in all expressions [sgra kun rjes su zhugs pa], as nothing he says needs correction and everything he says accords with grammar.
45. Buddha's speech is such that all his words are uncorrupted [sgra kun zur ma chag pa], as his mindfulness never decreases.
46. Buddha's speech never lacks anything [ma tshang ba med pa], as at all times and circumstances his actions benefit beings, and he accomplishes the wishes of beings.
47. Buddha's speech is without flattery [mi zhum pa], as he has no craving for gain, honor, or the like.
48. Buddha's speech is not timid [mi zhan pa], as he is free from the fear of embarrassment before his entourage.
49. Buddha's speech is supremely joyful [rab tu dga' ba], as he expounds the dharma without becoming tired or weary.
50. Buddha's speech encompasses all topics [don mtha' dag la khyab pa], as he is learned in all fields of knowledge.
51. Buddha's speech is free from rigidity [tha ba med pa / thab med pa], as he brings understanding to all beings out of his great kindness, caring even for those with no roots of virtue.

[1367] Indra, the king of the gods.

52. Buddha's speech is uninterrupted [rgyun chags pa], as he teaches constantly and continuously.
53. Buddha's speech is rich and majestic ['bel ba / brjid pa], as he brings understanding regarding many subjects.
54. Buddha's speech has perfected all languages [sgra kun rdzogs par byed pa], as each of his words manifests in the respective language of each member of his audience, human and non-human.
55. Buddha's speech satisfies the senses [dbang po tshim par byed pa], as he elucidates every topic [don kun snang ba] each person wants to know.
56. Buddha's speech is not inferior [ma smad], as whatever he says is blameless.
57. Buddha's speech is unchanging [mi 'gyur ba], as he teaches for the benefit of others, never at the wrong moment but always at the appropriate time.
58. Buddha's speech is not rushed [ma rtags pa], as he never speaks in a hurry nor does he omit words by talking too fast.
59. Buddha's speech fully resounds through the entire assembly ['khor kun tu grags pa], as everyone hears him with equal clarity, regardless of being near to him or far from him.
60. Buddha's speech is endowed with the supreme of all aspects [rnam pa kun gyi mchog dang ldan pa], as he can perfectly communicate any point through analogy drawn from the physical world.

Text section 52-55

Having surveyed the qualities displayed by a buddha teacher when he teaches, as well as having considered how the minds of those in the Buddha's audience respond to the Buddha's qualities, we come next to how an arhat teacher expounds the dharma. Most importantly, an arhat teacher adheres to a special *three-fold purity* [dag pa gsum] when expounding the dharma. This three-fold purify depends on the *pure capacity of the listener* [nyan pa po'i snod dag pa], the *pure speech of the teacher* ['chad pa po'i ngag dag pa], and the *pure topic of the discourse* [gsung rab kyi brjod bya dag pa].

What does the pure capacity of the listener refer to? If the student is not suitable, an arhat teacher will not teach the dharma. The phrase *if the mind-stream (of the listener) is a suitable vessel* [rgyud snod rung ba gyur na] means that the student is an appropriate vessel for the teachings, that he has the capacity to understand them. The arhat teacher knows exactly what sort of teachings will best benefit a qualified student.

Initially, an arhat teacher examines the students to discover whether or not they may be proper vessels for receiving teachings. An arhat is able to directly perceive the minds of others through supernatural perception [mngon shes]. This clairvoyant knowing of others' minds is the supreme manner of examination. For one lacking such higher capacities, the next best way of examining students is to observe their conduct

[bya ba byed pa]. The third and least effective way is to examine people by questioning them. In these ways the arhat teacher can see for himself directly whether or not the mind of the student is suitable to receive the dharma.

Nevertheless, the limitless wisdom-knowledge of a buddha teacher far surpasses the arhat teacher's supernatural perception of the minds of others. For example, an arhat must first enter into meditative samadhi; only then can he discern the minds of others. The limitless wisdom-knowledge of a buddha teacher knows everything simultaneously at all times.

What is meant by the pure speech of an arhat teacher? An arhat is 'someone who has defeated the (inner) foes of afflictions [nyon mongs pa'i dgra bcom pa] through realizing the selflessness of personal identity [gang zag gi bdag med]. Having overcome the obscurations of afflictions [nyon sgrib], an arhat has been freed from the gross levels of ignorance [gti mug], attachment ['dod chags], aversion [zhe sdang], pride [nga rgyal], and jealousy [phrag dog]. An arhat's speech and words are utterly pure [ngag tshig dri ma med pa], never mingled with afflictions, since his mind has been freed from the subjective bias of afflictions. The arhat can speak of nothing other than the dharma; even if requested, he would not engage in mundane conversation about worldly matters. An arhat has not, however, fully extinguished ignorance. Since he has not yet realized the selflessness of phenomena [chos kyi bdag med], he still retains a subtle ignorance.

Concerning the pure topic of his discourse, the third aspect of the three-fold purity observed by an arhat teacher, since an arhat has the *dhāraṇī of perfect recollection* [mi brjed pa'i gzungs]—the capacity to remember perfectly the dharma teachings he has heard—he can repeat verbatim the teachings spoken by the Buddha. An arhat neither adds any element of his own nor omits anything from the teachings he has heard; further, he is never mistaken or confused about the meaning of the teachings. Hearing the dharma from an arhat teacher is to hear authentic words that the arhat himself heard in the presence of the Buddha. This authenticity has always been safeguarded because the Buddha's teachings have been handed down from arhat to arhat, through the generations of the heirs to the doctrine.

The arhats are also called 'listeners' or *śrāvakas* [nyan thos], because they 'hear' [nyan] and 'listen' [thos] to the Buddha's teachings. As they have first listened to and then proclaimed the teachings to others [gzhan la sgrog par byed pa], they are also called 'listeners' and 'proclaimers' [thos sgrog]. Arhats repeat only the words of the Buddha. In this way, we can see that when an arhat teaches, all three purities are fully present.

Traditionally, arhats recite the Buddha's words repeatedly to themselves, contemplating [bsam] the meaning again and again. Internalizing teachings in this way through pondering their meaning, the content of the teachings remains with them at all times. This is what is meant by their thoroughly 'familiarizing' [sgom] themselves with the teachings.

This sequence of absorbing the teachings is generally known as listening, contemplating, and gaining familiarity; also commonly called study, contemplation,

and meditation [thos bsam sgom gsum]. The word 'meditation' denotes 'familiarization' [sgom, skr. bhāvanā]. Through this sequential approach arhats gain realization and can accurately pass the teachings on to their students. This rigorous standard of training has led to Buddhism's great scholastic tradition, which has been retained to the present day.

Even in these times, teachers of Buddhism ought to follow the example of the arhat as a model for their own teaching. This is the most respectful way to present the teachings of the Buddha. The authenticity and integrity of the Buddha's teaching are definitely preserved; neither is anything added nor is a single detail of the Buddha's complete teaching omitted.

The term 'turning of the wheel of dharma' [chos kyi 'khor lo bskor ba] refers both to the Buddha's original transmission of the dharma and to the ancient method of passing on the genuine content of the Buddha's teachings. At the time of the Buddha, the teachings were not written down but were transmitted from mouth to ear and committed to memory by those who had heard them. The Buddha taught the entire three piṭakas,[1368] and his arhat students retained everything in their minds. This they faithfully passed on to their students, who in turn preserved them intact in their minds, passing them on to their students. This precious oral transmission of the authentic teachings of the Buddha passed from master to student in an unbroken lineage can rightly be called the 'turning of the wheel of dharma'.

Text section 56-61:

Now Khenpo Kunpal explains four reasons why the teaching capacity of an arhat teacher is inferior to that of a buddha teacher, since arhats cannot teach in the three miraculous ways, which are possible only for the Buddha himself:

1. In text section 57 Khenpo Kunpal explains that arhats do not know what is occuring in very *distant places* [gnas kyi bskal pas mi shes pa]. An arhat's limited supernatural perception only pervades 'the second order of thousand world systems' [stong gnyis], meaning one thousand world systems to the power of two, within a trichiliocosm [stong gsum]. A pratyekabuddha can reportedly perceive the events within an entire trichiliocosm, meaning one thousand world systems to the power of three. The Buddha, however, can perceive in actuality every detail within countless trichiliocosms throughout the three times.

   When the mother of Buddha's main student *Maudgalyāyana* [maudgal gyi bu] passed away, Maudgalyāyana tried to locate her place of rebirth through supernatural insight. Unable to see where she had been reborn, he went to the

1368 The three piṭakas [sde snod gsum] are the sūtra piṭaka, the vinaya piṭaka and the abhidharma piṭaka. For a detailed explanation see *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, pages 78-80.

Buddha, who told him that his mother had been reborn in a very distant buddha field called Mārīci ['od zer can].[1369]

2. The second reason that an arhat's teaching capacity is inferior to that of the Buddha is that arhats are ignorant about *distant times* [dus kyi bskal pa]. The noble *Śāriputra* [sha ri'i bu] could not see any merit, any seed for liberation, in the mind of the old *householder Śrīja* [sbyin bdag dpal skyes]; yet the Buddha was able to explain to Śāriputra that Śrīja had accumulated some merit many aeons previously. Śāriputra's supernatural perception was simply not powerful enough to see so far back into Śrīja's past lives.[1370]

3. The third reason arhats lack the teaching abilities of the Buddha is that arhats are ignorant regarding the virtually unfathomable nature of cause and effect. Thus, they are unable to precisely determine the causes and conditions of something as minor as each individual particle of a single body hair. They cannot fathom the endless sequence of causes leading to the existence of that single hair. Nor do arhats know what will happen to this hair in the future, not to mention the future of each particle of that hair, such as what will become of each particle after the hair itself has decomposed.

   This is what the statement: *unfathomable results that come from unfathomable causes* [rgyu thug med kyi 'bras bu thug med] means. The true nature of both causes [rgyu] and results ['bras bu] is unfathomable [thug med] for arhats. Only the Buddha is able to see the subtle causes that lead to a *single spot of color* [mdangs bkra gcig / sgro thig gcig] on a peacock's feather. The Buddha can clearly see every detail that has contributed to the unique shape and color of the spot on the peacock's feather.

   On one occasion, some people brought the Buddha the ashes of various pieces of brocade that had been burned, asking him to identify their origins. Based on the ashes alone, the Buddha recounted every detail of the brocade and its owners. On another occasion, some householders brought the Buddha different types of rice, and he told them exactly where each variety had come from and to whom it belonged.

4. Finally, the fourth reason is that arhats actually lack most of the Buddha's qualities, such as the *ten powers* [stobs bcu], the *four kinds of fearlessness* [mi 'jigs pa bzhi], the eighteen *non-associated qualities* [ma 'dres pa bco brgyad], and so forth. All of these are wisdom qualities, not physical powers, and they are among the Buddha's special qualities [sangs rgyas kyi khyad chos], distinguishing him from an arhat. Not even a tenth level bodhisattva possesses the eighteen non-associated qualities.

1369 See *dad pa'i nyin byed*, pages 271-274.

1370 For more details on this story see khyim bdag dpal skyes kyi gtam rgyud, in *gtam rgyud*, pages 57-66; rab tu byung ba'i yon tan bsngags pa'i le'u, in *mdzangs blun*, page 125-150; *sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das kyi rnam thar*, pages 318-319.

To further detail some of these qualities of the Buddha, the dharmakāya of the Buddha is said to possess twenty-one categories of non-defiling qualities [zag pa med pa'i chos sde tshan nyer]. These are enumerations of the Buddha's wisdom qualities [sangs rgyas kyi mkhyen pa'i yon tan]. Among them are the *ten powers of the Tathāgata* [de bzhin gshegs pa'i stobs bcu]:[1371]

1. The power of knowing what is accurate and what is inaccurate [gnas dang gnas ma yin pa'i mkhyen pa'i stobs]. A buddha knows the specific cause of a specific result, thus knowing for himself the truth that virtue leads to happiness and not to suffering. A buddha knows exactly which cause brings which result. Whatever there is to know, everywhere and at all times, a buddha knows in one instant, clearly and without impediment.
2. The power of knowing the ripening of karma [las kyi rnam smin mkhyen pa'i stobs]. A buddha knows the individual karmas of all beings, be they virtuous or non-virtuous, defiling or non-defiling, and he further knows how all of these karmas will ripen.
3. The power of knowing the different kinds of dispositions and characters [gshis ka] of beings [khams ji snyed pa sna tshogs mkhyen pa].
4. The power of knowing the different inclinations of beings [mos pa rnam pa sna tshogs mkhyen pa]. A buddha knows the individual likes and dislikes of all beings.
5. The power of knowing the various sharp and dull capacities of beings [dbang po rno rtul rnam pa sna tshogs mkhyen pa]. A buddha knows perfectly the individual capacities of beings.
6. The power of knowing where all the different paths lead [kun tu 'gro ba'i lam sna tshogs pa mkhyen pa]. A buddha knows the paths that lead to the higher forms of rebirth and the paths that lead to liberation and omniscience. He knows the necessary causes as well as the methods that enable beings to traverse all the different paths.
7. The power of knowing all the different forms of concentration [bsam gtan gyi bkod pa sna tshogs pa ji snyed pa mkhyen pa]. A buddha knows all forms of concentration, those which are still entangled in the afflictions as well as those that are free from afflictions. He knows the reasons, the methods, and the results of all possible forms of concentration.
8. The power of remembering the former existences of himself and others [rang gzhan sngon gyi gnas sna tshogs pa ji snyed pa mkyhen pa]. A buddha knows the previous births of all sentient beings.
9. The power of knowing all the births and deaths of beings in the past and where they will take birth in the future ['gro ba rnams 'chi 'pho ba dang ma 'ongs pa'i skye ba ji snyed pa mkhyen pa]. A buddha knows through the divine eye [lha'i mig] when

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[1371] See *mi pham mkhas 'jug*, pages 315-316.

and where each being has died and taken rebirth throughout their past, present, and future lives.

10. The power of knowing the exhaustion of all defilements and the path to reach such exhaustion [zag pa thams cad zad pa nyid du gyur pa'i lam dang 'bras bu mkhyen pa]. Only a buddha has realized the ultimate fruition, the exhaustion of all obscurations, afflictive as well as cognitive. A buddha also knows how to guide others on the path that leads to the exhaustion of all defilements.

The twenty-one categories of the non-defiling qualities [zag pa med pa'i chos sde tshan nyer] of the Buddha's dharmakāya also include the *four kinds of fearlessness* [mi 'jigs pa bzhi]. After Buddha attained enlightenment, Māra, the evil one, raised doubts in the face of the Buddha's enlightenment. Buddha touched the earth with the fingertips of his right hand in the mudra of fearlessness [mi 'jigs pa'i rgya] and called upon the Earth Deity [sa yi lha mo bstan ma] as his witness, proclaiming the lion's roar: "I have gained perfect enlightenment!" The Earth Deity bore witness to the truth of this statement of the Buddha.

The four kinds of fearlessness are:[1372]

1. A buddha is fearless in proclaiming the perfect realization which benefits himself [rang don rtogs pa phun tshogs zhal gyis bzhes pa la mi 'jigs pa], saying, "I have perfectly realized all there is to know."
2. A buddha is fearless in proclaiming the perfect overcoming which benefits himself [rang don spang ba phun tshogs zhal gyis bzhes pa la mi 'jigs pa], saying, "I have overcome all there is to overcome, such as the two obscurations together with their habitual tendencies." These two proclamations truthfully state how a buddha has benefited himself.
3. A buddha is fearless in showing the path of renunciation and liberation which benefits others [gzhan don du nges par 'byung ba'i lam ston pa la mi 'jigs pa], saying, "Through the paths of realizing egolessness and so forth, my students can reach the level of liberation."
4. A buddha is fearless in showing the obstacles on the path in order to benefit others [gzhan don du lam gyi gegs ston pa la mi 'jigs pa], saying, "The afflictions such as attachment and so forth are the obstacles on the path." These two proclamations truthfully state how a buddha benefits others.

No one of great stature in this world, be it a god, a māra, the knowledgeable Brahma, a brahmin, or anyone else can say in accordance with the dharma concerning these proclamations, "It is not like this." Because the Buddha is beyond dispute, he proclaimed to his entourage, like a lion, without fear or inhibition, the lion's roar.

1372 See *mi pham mkhas 'jug*, pages 317-318.

Thus, in accordance with the truth, the Buddha has stated: 1) "I have gained omniscience"; 2) "I am free of all defects"; 3) "The path that I teach leads to liberation"; and 4) "Afflictions are the obstacles that prevent liberation." Since the Buddha has gained utter certainty, he has no hesitation or fear to speak the truth and teach the dharma accordingly.[1373]

The twenty-one categories of the non-defiling qualities [zag pa med pa'i chos sde tshan nyer gcig] of the Buddha's dharmakāya also include the *eighteen non-associated qualities* [ma 'dres pa'i chos bco brgyad]:[1374]

The six non-associated qualities concerning his conduct [spyod pas bsdus pa'i drug]:

1. The Tathāgata's physical conduct is without delusion [sku las 'khrul ba mi mnga' ba].
2. The Tathāgata's speech is without unnecessary sounds [gsung la ca co mi mnga' ba].
3. The Tathāgata's memory is without failure [thugs la dran pa nyams pa mi mnga' ba].
4. The Tathāgata's mind never leaves equanimity [mnyam pa ma bzhag pa'i thugs mi mnga' ba].
5. The Tathāgata is without various concepts ['du shes sna tshogs mi mnga' ba].
6. The Tathāgata is without an undiscerning equanimity [ma brtags pa'i btang snyoms mi mnga' ba].

The six non-associated qualities concerning his realization [rtogs pas bsdus pa drug]

7. The Tathāgata's aspiration is without degeneration ['dun pa nyams pa mi mnga' ba]. His aspirations for the lineage holders of the dharma and the benefit of all sentient beings never degenerate.
8. The Tathāgata's diligence is without degeneration [brtson 'grus nyams pa mi mnga' ba]. His diligence is joyful for the benefit of others.
9. The Tathāgata's awareness is without degeneration [dran pa nyams pa mi mnga' ba]. His awareness never loses the vision of all phenomena exactly as they are.
10. The Tathāgata's wisdom-knowledge is without degeneration [shes rab nyams pa mi mnga' ba]. He never loses his wisdom-knowledge of clear discernment.

1373 See *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, Vol. II, page 130: 1) Fearless in the knowledge of all things [chos thams cad mkhyen pa la mi 'jigs pa]; 2) fearless in the knowledge of the cessation of all corruption [zag pa zad pa thams cad mkhyen pa la mi 'jigs pa]; 3) fearless to declare definitively that phenomena which obstruct the path do not become anything else [bar du gcod pa'i chos rnams gzhan du mi 'gyur bar nges pa'i lung bstan pa la mi 'jigs pa]; 4) the fearlessness that the path of renunciation, through which all excellent attributes are to be obtained, has been just so realized [phun sum tshogs pa thams cad thob par 'gyur ba nges par 'byung ba'i lam de bzhin du gyur ba la mi 'jigs pa].

1374 See *mi pham mkhas 'jug*, pages 318-320.

11. The Tathāgata's samādhi is without degeneration [ting nge 'dzin nyams pa mi mnga' ba].
12. The Tathāgata's perfect liberation is without degeneration [rnam par grol ba mnyams pa mi mnga' ba]. His wisdom is utterly freed from all obscurations.

The three non-associated qualities concerning his activity [mdzad pas bsdus pa gsum]:

13. All the activities of the Tathāgata's body are preceded by wisdom and followed by wisdom [sku' las thams cad ye shes sngon du 'gro zhing ye shes kyi rjes su 'brang ba'am 'jug pa].
14. All the activities of the Tathāgata's speech are preceded by wisdom and followed by wisdom [gsung gi las thams cad ye shes sngon du 'gro zhing ye shes kyi rjes su 'brang ba'am 'jug pa]
15. All the acivities of the Tathāgata's mind are preceded by wisdom and followed by wisdom [thugs kyi las thams cad ye shes sngon du 'gro zhing ye shes kyi rjes su 'brang ba'am 'jug pa].

Thus, all activities of his body, speech, and mind are in all circumstances and at all times meaningful.

The three non-associated qualities concerning time [dus kyis bsdus pa gsum]:

16. The Tathāgata has entered into the unobscured and unhindered wisdom perception in regard to the past ['das pa'i dus la ma chags ma thogs pa'i ye shes gzigs pa 'jug pa].
17. The Tathāgata has entered into the unobscured and unhindered wisdom perception in regard to the future [ma 'ongs pa'i dus la ma chags ma thogs pa'i ye shes gzigs pa 'jug pa].
18. The Tathāgata has entered into the unobscured and unhindered wisdom perception in regard to the present [da lta'i dus la ma chags ma thogs pa'i ye shes gzigs pa 'jug pa].

Thus, he knows everything throughout all times.

As can be seen from the description of the qualities of a buddha quoted above, the Buddha's sublime qualities of overcoming and realization [spangs rtogs gi yon tan] vastly transcend the qualities of arhats. A buddha has perfected every possible quality that needs to be perfected, has overcome every fault that needs to be overcome, and has realized the totality of everything that can possibly be realized. A buddha has fully perfected every aspect of body, speech, mind, qualities, and activities. He has reached the end, as for a buddha there is nothing left to accomplish or perfect. A buddha is like a vase perfectly filled with nectar. These examples show the degree to which a buddha's realizations and qualities surpass those of the śrāvakas, pratyekabuddhas, and bodhisattvas. Although these latter have reached extremely worthy states of attainment, nevertheless, they still have not perfected all there is to realize, nor have they overcome all there is to overcome.

Text sections 62-63:

Having surveyed how a buddha teacher and an arhat teacher expound the dharma, Khenpo Kunpal goes on to address the manner of exposition of a learned paṇḍita teacher. In traditional Buddhist India, paṇḍitas were the product of the great classical institutions of Buddhist learning, the two most renowned being the Buddhist universities of Nālandā and Vikramaśīla. The tradition of the Early Translation School [snga 'gyur snying ma pa] traces itself back to the university of Nālandā, which produced such illustrious scholars as the incomparable Nāgārjuna [klu sgrub]. Among the masters who brought Buddhism to Tibet, many of them, such as Śāntarakṣita [zhi ba 'tsho] and Guru Rinpoche, were paṇḍitas who had graduated from Nālandā.

Paṇḍitas from Nālandā had a particular style of explication of the direct and authentic words of the Buddha [sangs rgyas kyi bka' thad ka], which was known as the *five-fold excellence* [phun sum tshogs pa lnga]. Furthermore, they possessed a unique method of analysis that they applied to the treatises [bstan bcos, skr. śāstra] written about the Buddha's teachings, which was known as the 'five types of preliminary assessment' [rtsis 'go yan lag lnga].

The first of these, the *five-fold excellence* [phun sum tshogs pa lnga], refers to the following: (1) the excellent teaching [chos phun sum tshogs pa], (2) the excellent teacher [ston pa phun sum tshogs pa], (3) the excellent place [gnas phun sum tshogs pa], (4) the excellent entourage ['khor phun sum tshogs pa], and (5) the excellent time [dus phun sum tshogs pa]. Teaching the dharma according to these five excellences ensures the teaching's authenticity.

Text section 64-65:

Just as the paṇḍitas from Nālandā were famous for their unique style of exposition, the paṇḍitas from Vikramaśīla were also famous for their method of explaining the Buddha's words [sangs rgyas kyi bka']. The first step in their teaching method was *transforming the listeners into proper vessels* [nyan pa po snod rung bya ba]. At the beginning, they would give teachings and instructions that served to prepare the minds of their listeners to receive the teachings in the proper manner.

The paṇḍitas of Vikramaśīla would next present the *classification of the doctrine* [bstan pa'i rnam bzhag] by means of the *twofold certainty* [nges pa gnyis]: establishing the certainty that what was being taught had actually been spoken by the Buddha [sangs rgyas kyi gsung yin par nges pa]; and establishing the certainty that what was being taught was the genuine and sublime dharma [dam pa'i chos yang dag par nges pa]. In this way, they established the authenticity of both the teacher [ston pa tshad ldan] and the teaching [chos tshad ldan]. While the tradition of the teaching style of Nālandā has been maintained down to the present day, the teaching style of Vikramaśīla no longer exists within Tibetan Buddhism.

Text section 66:

Khenpo Kunpal here applies the second method of analysis that developed at Nālandā to the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. As the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is not the direct words of the Buddha [bka'] but a treatise [bstan bcos, skr. śāstra] on the Buddha's teachings, Khenpo Kunpal's commentary on it has to follow the 'five types of preliminary assessment' [rtsis 'go yan lag lnga] according to the Nālandā tradition. When someone composed or taught a treatise at Nālandā on the words of the Buddha, his composition was subjected to five questions:

1. Which author composed it (the treatise)?
2. Upon which scriptures does it draw?
3. Under which category is it classified?
4. What is the brief meaning (of the treatise) from beginning to end?
5. For whose benefit and for what purpose was it composed?

Text section 67:

In answer to the first question, regarding who composed the treatise, the author's qualification must be established. *Three criteria for composing a treatise* [bstan bcos rtsom pa'i rgyu gsum] are required. At best, the author needs to have realized the view of the natural state [rab chos nyid gyi lta ba rtogs pa]. Next best, he should have had a vision of his personal meditation deity ['bring lhag pa'i lha zhal gzigs thob pa]. At the very least, the author must be learned in the five or ten sciences [rig pa'i gnas bcu la mkhas pa].

The most eminently qualified, the superior type, are masters who have realized the view of the natural state, masters such as Nāgārjuna and Asaṅga. The intermediate degree of authority belongs to masters who received permission to write treatises directly from their meditation deities, masters like Dignāga and Candragomin. The lesser category includes masters learned in the five sciences and possessing the instructions of the lineage masters, masters such as Śrīgupta[1375] and Śākyamati [śākya blo gros].[1376]

What are commonly known as the ten sciences [rig gnas bcu] are the five greater sciences and the five lesser sciences. The five greater sciences [rig gnas che ba lnga] are: 1) the science of arts [bzo rig gnas], 2) medical science [gso ba'i rig gnas], 3) the science of linguistics [sgra'i rig gnas], 4) the science of logic [gtan tshigs kyi rig gnas], and 5) the science of inner meaning [nang don rig pa], which is Buddhist philosophy as taught in the tripiṭaka [sde snod gsum]. The first four of these sciences are also called the 'four common sciences' [thun mong gi rig gnas bzhi].[1377]

1375 For biographical notes on Śrīgupta [dpal sbas] see *Crystal Mirror Vol. VI*, page 314.

1376 See *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, page 108.

1377 For a detailed explanation of the five greater sciences see *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, pages 97-109.

The five lesser sciences [rig gnas chung ba lnga] are: 1) poetics [snyan ngag], 2) synonymics [mngon brjod], 3) prosody [sdeb sbyor], 4) drama [zlos gar], and 5) astrology [skar rtsis]. To be learned in the inner sciences means that an author of a Buddhist treatise should be learned in both sūtra and tantra. The purpose of knowing all the sciences is to be able to help all sentient beings through all fields of knowledge. Every educated person in India, right up to princes and princesses, aspired to learn the five greater sciences.[1378] Knowledge of the sciences enables one to benefit one's own body, speech, and mind as well as those of others.

Śāntideva fulfills all of the above three criteria and is thus supremely qualified to expound the dharma. Śāntideva was a noble being dwelling on the exalted levels of the bodhisattvas. He had realized the view of the natural state. He had repeatedly met face to face his meditation deity, Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, also called Mañjughoṣa ['jam pa'i dbyangs] or Mañjuśrīghoṣa ['jam dpal dbyangs], and had received teachings on the tripiṭaka and the five sciences directly from Mañjuśrī himself.

If any author of a Buddhist text fails to fulfill at least one of these three criteria, whatever he writes about the dharma is considered to be poisonous and will harm other beings instead of benefiting them. Therefore, when you meet someone who writes about Buddhism, ask them, "Have you studied the five sciences, the sūtras and tantras?" If the answer is yes, continue asking, "Have you had the vision of your yidam?" If the answer is again yes, you know he has practiced meditation intensely. If, in addition to that, he has realized the view of the natural state [chos nyid gyi lta ba], he is both a true master and a great scholar. To have realized the view of the natural state means that one has at the very least reached the first bodhisattva level.

Everyone who has reached the exalted state of a noble being, who has reached the first bodhisattva level or even higher states, is authorized to write treatises and commentaries on the words of the Buddha. If the author of a treatise fulfills all three criteria for composing texts, his writing will truly benefit beings. If an author fulfills only one or two of the criteria, his writing will still be beneficial, but its impact and effect on sentient beings' behavior will be less.

What is it, then, that allows one to benefit beings through Buddhist writings? The main force behind a truly beneficial treatise or commentary is the blessing power of the natural state [chos nyid gyi byin rlabs]; this is the source of the blessings of the Buddha which benefit sentient beings. Intellectually constructed treatises are merely the fabrications of dry scholasticism and so cannot benefit beings significantly. In these

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1378 *The Bodhicaryāvatāra, a new translation*, page XXVIII: "There were around 3,000 students, both monk and lay, all of whom came to Nālandā to further their education, and had to pass an exacting entrance examination as conducted orally. Many were said to come for this education as a stepping-stone to a prestigious political career…. Not all students at Nālandā were Buddhists. While Mahāyāna Buddhist philosophy was reputedly a compulsory subject, the curriculum also included other Buddhist literature, both Mahāyāna and Hīnayān, as well as the Vedas (the scriptural authority of Brahmanical Hinduism), logic, grammar, medicine, magic, Sāṃkhya philosophy, and a number of other subsidary subjects, such as art."

times, it seems that a flood of Buddhist writings is coming out of the West, unfortunately stemming from authors who do not fulfill even a single one of the three criteria. Books of this nature do not serve the dharma but chiefly contribute only to the fame or notoriety of the author.

Even at a great institution of authentic Buddhist learning such as Nālandā University, which housed so many scholars, not every scholar would write treatises on Buddhism, or even on one of the sciences. But if a treatise were to be written, the author was required to present and defend his treatise before all the scholars of the university. If he passed the critical examination, his treatise would be placed on the back of a decorated elephant and conducted about in a solemn procession. If the author failed the examination, the treatise would be labeled as "worthy to be tied to the tail of a dog and set on fire." That means: "This treatise is as valuable as dog poop. Better burn it quickly!"

Moving to the scriptural sources of the teaching, the second preliminary assessment, it must be established that the treatise accords with the teachings of the Buddha. Concerning the category of the treatise, the third preliminary assessment, the treatise must be classified as belonging to either the Hīnayāna or Mahāyāna teachings. The fourth point of preliminary assessment requires a summary of the overall meaning; the author must state the meaning and import of the treatise in brief. In response to the fifth preliminary assessment, the author must indicate both whom the text is to benefit and must state the purpose of the treatise. If the treatise is found to have no benefit and no real purpose, it is established that there was no reason to have written it in the first place.

Text section 68:

Khenpo Kunpal now recounts Śāntideva's life story in *seven amazing episodes* [ngo mtshar ba'i gtam bdun], which are also mentioned in Butön's history.[1379] These are:

1. Pleasing his supreme meditation deity [lhag pa'i lha mnyes].
2. His perfect display of activity at Nālandā [na lendra'i bkod pa phun tshogs].
3. Preventing a war [rtsod pa bzlog].
4. Taming those who held strange views [ya mtshan can btul ba].
5. Taming the beggars [sprang po btul ba].
6. Taming the king [rgyal po btul ba].
7. Taming the tīrthikas [mu stegs can btul ba].

Text section 69:

[1379] See *History of Buddhism*, page 161; and *bu ston chos 'byung*, page 166.

The first episode in Śāntideva's exemplary life describes how he came to please his *supreme meditation deity* [lhag pa'i lha mnyes]. Śāntideva was born as the son of King Kalyāṇavarnam [dge ba'i go cha] and was named Śāntivarnam [zhi ba'i go cha]. From his earliest youth he had a natural *inclination toward the Mahāyāna family* [theg chen gyi rigs la gnas pa]. Those fortunate ones who are inclined toward the Mahāyāna family are blessed with vast minds and vast aspirations [bsam pa dang mos pa rgya che ba'i gang zag]. Also, those with such an inclination are by nature not fearful of the meaning of profound emptiness [zab mo stong pa nyid]. They labor joyfully for the benefit of others, motivated by great compassion, being compassionate by nature. In this context, the term 'affinity' or 'inclination' [rigs] connotes the character [gshis ka] of the individual.

People with a natural inclination toward the Hīnayāna family [theg dman gyi rigs] are people who by nature are, for the most part, interested in their own happiness, without particularly rejoicing in benefiting others [gzhan don la mi spro ba]. In this sense, their minds and their aspirations are limited. Even if they are instructed in profound emptiness, they will be unable to understand what is being spoken of. In contrast, those inclined toward the Mahāyāna family are filled with interest and delight the moment they so much as hear the term 'profound emptiness'.

People's natural affinity with or inclination toward the dharma can be toward either the Hīnayāna [theg dman gyi rigs can] or the Mahāyāna [theg chen gyi rigs can]. When the virtuous karma of such beings has sufficiently ripened [las smin pa], they will 'awaken to their own affinity' [rigs sad pa] and have the opportunity to perceive the Buddha and receive his teachings.

The phrase to 'awaken to one's Mahāyāna affinity' [theg chen gyi rigs sad pa] means to awaken into the Mahāyāna family, progressing from first entering into the primary stages of the path of accumulation [tshogs lam chung ngu] up to the primary stages of the path of seeing [mthong lam chung ngu]. Practitioners on these stages are those who have genuinely developed relative bodhicitta in their minds. The phrase to 'attain the fruition of the Mahāyāna' [theg chen gyi 'bras bu thob pa] refers to those who actually dwell on the first to the tenth bodhisattva levels.

The first episode of Śāntideva's biography mentions that he first studied *science* [rig pa] and *art* [sgyu rtsal]. As mentioned before, 'science' here refers to the ten sciences [rig gnas bcu], which are the five greater sciences and the five lesser sciences. 'Art' refers to the sixty-four arts [sgyu rtsal drug cu re bzhi]: the thirty skills [bzo rig gi sgyu rtsal sum cu], the eighteen arts of musical instruments [rol mo'i sgyu rtsal bco brgyad], the seven harmonious tones [glu dbyangs nges pa bdun], and the nine expressions of dance [gar gyi cha byad dgu].

As part of the background to this episode of how Śāntideva came to please his supreme meditation deity, we are told that Śāntideva received the initiation, reading transmission, and meditation instructions on a Mañjuśrī practice called *tikṣṇa-Mañjuśrī-sādhana* ['jam dpal rnon po'i sgrub thabs] from a kusulu, a *beggar yogin* [rnal 'byor pa]. Śāntideva practiced this sādhana in secret with great diligence and endeavor, and he beheld many direct visions of Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī. For further details about

Śāntideva's studies with this beggar yogin, see Vibhūticandra's version of the biography below in the commentary to text section 93.

In Mahāyāna Buddhism, one's personal meditation deity is called a 'special deity' [lhag pa'i lha]; this is identical in meaning with the Vajrayāna Buddhist term 'yidam deity' [yi dam gyi lha]. Among the countless forms of buddhas, bodhisattvas, and deities, practitioners will generally commit [dam] themselves to one special deity [dmigs gsal gyi lha] with whom they share a personal connection. Regardless of whether one practices Mahāyāna, Vajrayāna, or Dzogchen, a practitioner must rely on a special deity, on a yidam.

This is necessary since practitioners need an object of devotion in order to develop their faith. One would not expect beginners to be able to develop devotion without an object of faith toward which to focus their prayers. In Mahāyāna Buddhism, one need not necessarily practice a formal sādhana. Simply visualizing one's special deity and supplicating that deity is sufficient. Through the student's devotion, the deity's blessing will descend, filling the student's heart. Relying on blessing is a special and highly valued skillful means through which genuine bodhicitta and authentic realization will dawn in the student's mind.

We are told that in ancient India practitioners had a single yidam which they practiced throughout their entire lives. They would guard the secrecy of their yidam to the utmost. Traditionally, it is said that if you tell others the name of your yidam, your spiritual accomplishments will vanish. On the other hand, if you refuse to tell anyone about your practice, you will gain the accomplishments very quickly. Following this example from the old masters is most beneficial. Following their example, do not even disclose the name of your root guru. Ideally, your yidam, your mantra, and your root guru should be kept secret. If possible, they should not be revealed, even to your spouse or your friends.

Some people seem to think that receiving the transmission of more yidam practices means they can acquire more and more blessings. When the Indian master Atiśa came to Tibet, he said that the Tibetans had missed the point due to practicing too many deities [lha mang bas spungs]. Atiśa believed that Tibetans in general had not accomplished any of their many yidams, since he was unable to find signs of accomplishment in them. Thus, the expression, "One person, one deity [mi gcig lha gcig]."

Text sections 70-72:

The first episode of Śāntideva's biography says that after his father had passed away, Śāntideva was to ascend to the throne through the traditional enthronement ritual. Such a ritual formally 'empowers the heir to the throne to assume control over the kingdom' [rgyal thabs spyi blugs kyi dbang]. In ancient India, this ritual was generally performed by the brahmins of the royal court.

According to Vibhūticandra's version of Śāntideva's life, the night before his enthronement, Śāntideva's mother gave him a ritual bath and poured very hot water

over his head, causing the young prince to cry out in pain. His mother said, "If you were to become a king during this time of degeneration, you would (only) bring suffering to beings, due to the power of your afflictions. Then, when you die, you will endure sufferings in the hell realms far worse than this (hot water)." Śāntideva thus came to understand that holding worldly power entails committing a great many negative actions and that these unwholesome deeds inevitably lead to rebirth in the hell realms. This teaches us that the fruits of worldly power and influence are not what we imagine them to be.

Text section 73:

Regarding the second episode of Śāntideva's life, concerning his activities at Nālandā University, the text literally says 'the perfect design of Nālandā'. 'Design' [bkod pa] refers to the 'sequence of his life story' [rnam thar gyi bkod pa], meaning the *display of his actitvity* [mdzad pa]. Ideally, a translator should strive to find a term that covers both the literal translation of the word [tshig bsgyur] as well as the translation of the meaning [don bsgyur]. If an expression that perfectly matches both word and meaning cannot be found, then one should give preference to the meaning over the literal translation.

Regarding his *internal conduct*, Śāntideva studied the tripiṭaka in private with the noble Jayadeva ['phags pa]. This particular passage in Khenpo Kunpal's text is ambiguous because the phrase, "He studied the tripiṭaka with the Noble One," could refer either to the noble Mañjuśrī or to the noble Jayadeva. In our opinion, the term 'noble' or 'Noble One' ['phags pa] in this context refers to Jayadeva and not to Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī. Butön,[1380] in his biography of Śāntideva, is equally ambiguous saying, "As concerns his internal conduct, he heard the doctrine from the Noble One."

Tāranātha,[1381] in his biography of Śāntideva, states: "…though inwardly he was always meditating and listening to the doctrine from Ārya Mañjuśrī...." Another biographer, Tsechok Ling,[1382] renders it as, "Relying on the preceptor (Jayadeva), he studied the tripiṭaka and so became an outstanding scholar. Studying the dharma for a long time with the noble Mañjuśrī, he internalized all the teachings and instructions of sūtra and tantra."

On the basis of all the teachings he received, Śāntideva composed three treatises: the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra [spyod 'jug], the Śikṣā-samuccaya [bslab btus],[1383] and the Sūtra-samuccaya [mdo btus]. These treatises summarize all that he learned over the course of his studies of the sūtra teachings. While Śāntideva certainly had visions of

1380 See *bu ston chos 'byung*, page 167: nang gi kun spyod 'phags pa la chos gsan

1381 See *Tāranātha's History of Buddhism*, page 217; *rgya gar chos 'byung*, page 202: nang du ting nge 'dzin dang 'phags pa 'jam dpal la chos gsan zhing /

1382 See *lam rim bla brgyud*, folio 293.2: mkhan po la brten te sde snod gsum la sbyangs pas mkhas pa'i phul du phyin par gyur cing rje btsun 'jam pa'i dbyangs la yun du chos gsan te mdo sngags kyi bka' dang gdams ngag ma lus pa thugs su chud /

1383 For an English translation see *Compendium of Buddhist Doctrine*.

Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī, gaining many insights and ultimately great realization from him, it is also likely that he thoroughly studied the tripiṭaka with the Nālandā preceptor, Jayadeva.

Text section 74:

In his external conduct, Śāntideva acted like someone who was chiefly interested in eating, sleeping, and strolling around. For this reason he came to be called *Bhusuku*, 'one who just eats, sleeps, and strolls around'. This description, meant to ridicule Śāntideva, became his nickname. In contrast to the Tibetan interpretation of this name, Vibhūticandra's version of Śāntideva's life story indicates that the name 'Bhusuku' was meant to praise Śāntideva's ability to remain in the meditative state of luminosity during all activities, such as eating, sleeping, and strolling around. Possibly, the Tibetan scholars may have misinterpreted this name as having a negative connotation.

Vibhūticandra's commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra says,[1384] "Regardless of whether he was eating, sleeping, or strolling around, he constantly meditated on luminosity. Since he was (actually) dwelling in a samādhi called Bhusuku, he became widely known as Bhusuku" [za rung nyal rung 'chags rung rgyun tu 'od gsal bsgom pas bhu su ku zhes ting nge 'dzin la gnas pa'i phyir bhu su ku zhes ming yongs su grags so].

The corresponding Sanskrit version[1385] of Vibhūticandra's commentary reads: "bhuñjāno 'pi prabhāsvaraṃ supto 'pi kuṭim gato 'pi tad eveti bhāsukusamādhisamāpannatvāt bhāsukunāmākhyātaṃ."

The name Bhusuku is constructed from the first syllables of the Sanskrit words *bhu*ñjāno, *su*pto and *ku*ṭiṃ gata. Khenpo Kunpal gives *bhukta* for skr. *bhu*ñjāno, *susta* for skr. *su*pto and *kucchiva* for skr. *ku*ṭīṃ gata.

Text section 75:

While at Nālandā University, Śāntideva did not perform any of the required duties of a monk, such as the *three wheels (of conduct)* ['khor lo rnam gsum]. This refers to the three types of activities performed by saṃgha members: the wheel of reading and studying [klog pa thos bsam gyi 'khor lo]; the wheel of renunciation and meditation [spong ba bsam gtan gyi 'khor lo]; and the wheel of work and activities [bya ba las kyi 'khor lo]. A monk should either study, meditate, or work for the monastery. If a monk performs none of these three types of activities yet still lives on the offerings given by devotees to the monks, he accumulates considerable negative karma. He is undeservedly living off monastic property, 'undeserved consumption of monastic property' [dkor nag po za ba], an action that has dire karmic consequences.

[1384] See *vibhūti dgongs 'grel*, page 236, folio 231a1-2.

[1385] See Śāntideva mystique boudhiste, page 30; Légende de Śāntideva, pages 170-171 and *Zum Leben des Śāntideva*, page 11.

The 'wheel of reading and studying' means to read [klog pa] and study [thos pa] the direct teachings of the Buddha and the treatises collected in the tripiṭaka [sde snod gsum gyi bka' dang bstan bcos] under the guidance of a spiritual friend [dge ba'i bshes gnyen]. Students might study in a large shedra [bshad grva] or in a small study group. In any case, they need the guidance of a qualified tutor.

In the tradition of the Śrī Siṃha Shedra, students studied the 'thirteen philosophical textbooks of Indian origin' [gzhung chen bcu gsum] for nine years. During this time, they would carefully read the Kangyur and Tangyur at least twice. When reading and studying a given text many times, students contemplate the text's essential meaning in order to cut through all their questions and doubts. This process is called 'contemplation' [bsam pa].

The 'wheel of renunciation and meditation' [spong ba bsam gtan gyi 'khor lo] refers to a period of time, even up to an entire lifetime, spent in retreat, either in a retreat center [sgrub grva] or in a secluded place such as a cave [brag phug] or a hermitage [ri khrod]. 'Renunciation' [spong ba] here means abandoning all worldly activities ['jig rten gyi bya spong], having recognized them to be meaningless. 'Meditation' [bsam gtan] connotes structuring one's life around practice. For example, most of the scholars who graduated from the Śrī Siṃha Shedra spent many years in the caves of the surrounding mountain range known as Rudam Gang-Gyi-Rawa [ru dam gangs kyi ra ba].

The 'wheel of work and activities' [bya ba las kyi 'khor lo] designates all activities that benefit other beings [gzhan la phan pa'i bya ba], such as building monasteries, organizing great ritual ceremonies [sgrub chen], making medicines, printing books, and the like. More broadly, all the daily monastic activities of the monks living in a monastery belong to the wheel of work and activities. Every Buddhist monk must practice the wheel of reading, study, and contemplation, as well as the wheel of renunciation and meditation. Furthermore, study and meditation must be practiced together as a unity to be effective. Whether or not a monk would also engage in the wheel of work and activities depended upon many factors, including his skills, inclinations, and wishes of his teacher.

Text section 76:

Since a prominent monastery such as Nālandā required that its monks adhere to a strict discipline, Śāntideva's fellow monks concluded that he should be expelled for his inappropriate behavior. They devised a plan that they hoped would cause him to leave the monastery of his own accord. Since they all incorrectly assumed that he was completely devoid of learning, they cleverly requested that he publicly recite the sūtras. They were certain that he would rather leave the monastery than embarrass himself in front of all the monks and sponsors. After Śāntideva many times refused their requests for a recital, the abbot, Jayadeva, finally ordered him to recite the sūtras. To everyone's surprise, he agreed to do so.

Text section 77:

In a great monastic community such as Nālandā, the midday meal was the only meal served since strictly observant monks do not eat in the evening. When the whole community of Nālandā monks gathered for lunch, they numbered about ten thousand. People living in the surrounding area personally came and sponsored meals for the monks. Thus, including the monks, sponsors, and guests, the assembly could be as large as eleven or twelve thousand people.

After the meal, as an offering of gratitude to the lay community, one of the monks would give a public lecture on the dharma, or would perhaps recite some of the Buddhist sūtras. The common practice was to recite a sūtra spoken by the Buddha or to lecture on a particular sūtra. Delivering one's own commentary or composition to the assembly of lay persons and monks was highly unusual.

On this occasion, however, since the monks had conspired to drive Śāntideva from the monastery, they had arranged extensive offerings outside the monastery and had invited a crowd of outsiders to attend. They had even erected a throne so high that no one could possibly climb up and sit upon it. When they called for Śāntideva to come and teach, they were startled to find him already seated on the throne, although no one had seen him ascend it.

Text section 78:

Thus, from the throne, Śāntideva asked the monks, "Should I recite something well known, such as a sūtra previously spoken by the Ṛṣi [drang srong], by the Buddha, or should I recite something that you have never heard before, my own treatise, a composition I myself wrote?" No one suggested reciting his own treatise on such an occasion, so the monks were more than ever certain that if they requested him to do this, he would bring exceedingly great shame upon himself.

Text section 79:

While Śāntideva was reciting the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī appeared in the sky before him. When Śāntideva came to stanza 34 in the ninth chapter, the chapter on transcendental knowledge, both he and Mañjuśrī began floating up into the sky, until they gradually disappeared. After he had disappeared, Śāntideva's voice continued to echo from the sky, completing the entire text through the end of the tenth chapter.

Stanza 34 from the ninth chapter, reads as follows:

> When neither an 'entity' nor a 'non-entity'
> Remains before the mind,
> At that point, since there is no other position,
> It rests in utter peace, without any conceptualizing.
>
> gang tshe dngos dang dngos med dag
> blo yi mdun na mi gnas pa

de tshe rnam pa gzhan med pas
dmigs pa med par rab tu zhi

This stanza describes the wisdom of equanimity of noble beings ['phags pa'i mnyam bzhag gi ye shes], which is achieved from the first bodhisattva level, the path of seeing [mthong lam] onward. When a bodhisattva has reached this level of realization, mind's tendency of conceptualizing [dmigs pa] and fixating ['dzin pa] on everything has come to an end.

When one has genuinely recognized the buddha nature, the essence of one's mind, one is free from the view of a truly existing 'entity', believing that things truly exist [dngos por mngon par zhen pa] as well as free from the view of a truly existing 'non-entity', thinking that emptiness is something that truly exists [stong pa nyid du mngon par zhen pa]. At that time, one is also free from any other type of position, such as the view of 'both existence and non-existence' and of 'neither existence nor non-existence'.

Once all positions of fixation ['dzin stangs] have collapsed, all reference points to conceptualize, "It is empty" or "It is not empty" have collapsed. Thus, the wisdom of equanimity of noble beings rests in utter peace, without any conceptualizing. In this context the terms 'to fixate upon something' [der 'dzin], 'to have a view of something' [lta ba] or 'to conceptualize something' [dmigs pa] and 'to think' [bsam pa] have the same meaning.

Text section 80:

A few of the learned paṇḍitas in attendance later wrote down what they had heard, arriving at different versions of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. The Kashmiri paṇḍitas are said to have compiled a version with seven hundred stanzas in nine chapters, while the paṇḍitas from the Central Land produced a version of one thousand stanzas in ten chapters. These significant differences led to many doubts among the scholars.

Text sections 82-83:

In order to definitively resolve these doubts, as well as to question Śāntideva about the Śikṣā-samuccaya and the Sūtra-samuccaya, two paṇḍitas from Nālandā journeyed to meet him. Śāntideva told them that the version of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra held by the paṇḍitas from the Central Land, composed of ten chapters and one thousand stanzas, was in fact the correct one. In response to their questions about the Śikṣā-samuccaya and the Sūtra-samuccaya, Śāntideva said they would find both texts hidden between the rafters in his old room at Nālandā. Then he gave them the reading transmission and the instructions for these texts. This concludes the second of the seven amazing episodes of Śāntideva's life story.

The central message of this episode is that dharma practice is not intended to impress other people but to develop one's own realization. Spiritual practice is a very private affair, something engaged in for one's own development, and not something intended

for public display. Therefore, Śāntideva appeared as Bhusuku, remaining low key, harboring neither hopes nor fears about other people's opinions of him.

Text sections 84-90:

The third through sixth episodes in Śāntideva's biography are more or less self explanatory. However, a few comments can be added. In the fourth episode, Śāntideva tames *those who hold strange views* [ya mtshan gyi lta ba; skr. pāṣaṇḍika], alluding to various groups of spiritual seekers of that time. People held certain odd beliefs. Some thought it virtuous to live a life free from wearing clothes; others believed it virtuous to consort with dogs. Some considered that committing suicide would somehow lead to liberation from suffering, and so on.

In the sixth episode, describing how Śāntideva tamed the king [rgyal po btul ba], the phrase *harm from Macala* [ma tsa la'i gnod pa] could refer to a country that was threatening the king, or it could refer to a person named 'Macala'.[1386]

Text section 91:

The seventh and final episode of Śāntideva's biography recounts how he tamed the tīrthikas [mu stegs can btul ba], those who follow non-Buddhist paths. Śāntideva journeyed to the South, to *Śrīparvata* [dpal gyi ri] where he practiced the 'Uccuṣma conduct' [u tsa ma'i spyod pa], a special mode of 'yogic conduct' or 'conduct of discipline' [brtul zhugs spyod pa] requiring one to abstain from normal food and live instead on *leavings* [tshig ma], that which have been *thrown out* [pho ba] with the *dishwater* [khrud ma]. While living this way, Śāntideva went about naked like a beggar who could not even afford rags as clothing. Although ordinary people would quickly die if they tried to live in such a fashion, Śāntideva followed this special yogic conduct as a skillful means designed to destroy fixation on and attachment to concepts such as 'clean' and 'dirty'.

Text section 92:

In this section, the term *Buddhist representations* [nang pa'i lha rten] means any Buddhist statue, book, or stūpa. Statues are considered to be the representation of Buddha's body; the Buddhist scriptures are considered to be the representation of Buddha's speech; and all stūpas are considered to be the representation of Buddha's mind.

Text section 93:

In some of these stories, we notice that Śāntideva displays the miraculous conduct that characterizes the mahāsiddhas [grub thob chen po]. To destroy fierce and tenacious fixations ['dzin pa drag po] in the minds of some evildoers, he displays wrathful

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1386 In *History of Buddhism*, page 164, Obermiller translates the phrase with 'troubled by riots'.

activities [phrin las drag po]. Mahāsiddhas are able to display any of the four activities—pacifying, enriching, magnetizing, and subjugating (wrathful)—while their minds remain completely rooted in peace [zhi ba] and bodhicitta.

The *two lengths of cloth* [ras yug gnyis] refers to two uncut pieces of cloth that still have fringe at either end, which can be used as a skirt.

All of these aspects of Śāntideva's life story answer the scholars' first preliminary assessment: 'Which author composed (the treatise)?' Whatever teaching you are studying and practicing, you should first establish the reputation and integrity of the author. You need to know whether he was an enlightened person who intended to benefit beings, or whether he was an inferior person, harboring negative or self-serving intentions.

The earliest extant Tibetan account of Śāntideva's legendary life story, written by the Indian scholar Vibhūticandra,[1387] who came in the year 1204 to Tibet as part of the entourage of the Kashmīri mahāpaṇḍita, Śākyaśrībhadra (1127-1225), provides excellent background material concerning Śāntideva:[1388]

> Thus have I heard from the lineage! In the South, in Śrīnagara, (Śāntideva) was born as the son of the King Mañjuśrīvarma ['jam dpal go cha]. He paid respect to the buddhas of the past and practiced roots of virtue that were conducive to liberation. He had a pure inclination toward the Mahāyāna and was learned in all arts.
>
> 'di skad brgyud pa las thos te / / lho'i phyogs su dpal na ga ra la mi'i rgyal po 'jam dpal go cha'i bu ru skyes / sngon gyi sangs rgyas la bya ba byas pa / thar pa'i cha mthun gyi dge ba'i rtsa ba thob pa / / theg pa chen po'i rigs yang dag pa / sgyu rtsal thams cad la mkhas pa /
>
> At the time he was to be empowered as successor to the throne, his mother, the king's principal queen, who was an emanation of Vajrayoginī, made him bathe in hot water. Seeing that he could not bear the heat, his mother spoke the following words, "If you were to become a king during this time of degeneration, you would (only) bring suffering to beings, due to the power of your afflictions. Then, when you die, you will endure suffering in the hell realms far worse than this (hot water). There is no need (to rule) the kingdom. Son, go to the country of Bhaṃgala. There you will receive the blessing of Mañjughoṣa!"
>
> rgyal tshab tu dbang bskur ba'i dus su rdo rje rnal 'byor ma'i sprul pa / rgyal po'i btsun mo chen mo yum gyis chu dron pos khrus byed du bcug

1387 The short biography of Śāntideva is found in *vibhūti dgongs 'grel*, page 236, folios 229b6-231b5.

1388 The Sanskrit and the Tibetan versions of this short biography have been translated into French and German. See *Śāntideva mystique boudhiste*, pages 27-32; *Légende de Śāntideva*, pages 175-177; and *Zum Leben des Śāntideva*, pages 7-14.

pas / de'i drod mi bzod pa mthong nas / yum gyis 'di skad du smras te / snyigs ma'i dus su rgyal po byas na nyon mongs pa'i dbang gis sems can sdug tu bcug la / / shi nas dmyal bar 'di bas kyang drag pa'i sdug bsngal myong bar 'gyur bas rgyal srid kyis dgos pa med kyi bu khyod bhaṃ ga la'i yul du song / der khyod la 'jam pa'i dbyangs kyis byin gyis brlob par 'gyur zhes so //

Holding the command of his mother above his head, he mounted his best dapple gray horse and left. He rode day and night for many days without thinking of food, drink, and the like and continued on, thinking only of the command of his (mother). At the border of the country of Bhaṃgala he saw in a forest a most exquisite girl. After she had caught hold of his horse, he dismounted it.

de nas yum gyi bka' de spyi bor bzhag nas / thugs drang po rta mchog ljang gu la zhon te gshegs so / / de yang zhag du ma nyin mtshan med par 'gro ste / bza' btung la sogs pa yid la mi byed par de'i bka' gcig po la rtse gcig par 'gro ba la / / bhaṃ ga la'i yul gyi mtha' mar nags tshal gyi nang na bu mo rin po che zhig mthong ngo / / bu mo des rta bzung nas de rta las babs so / /

Since he was quite thirsty and saw water before him, he was ready to drink (the water). The girl said, "This is poisonous water. Don't drink it!" Having thus prevented him from (drinking) it, she allowed him to drink nectar-like water and let him have fried meat to eat. When he was thus satisfied, he asked the girl, "Where do you come from?" She replied, "In the center of this forest lives my master, someone who is ornamented with the accumulation of sublime qualities, a compassionate one, who practices the samādhi of the Śrīmañjuvajra. That is where I come from."

de ni shin tu skom pas mdun du chu mthong nas btung bar brtsams so / / bu mos 'di ni dug gi chu yin pas ma 'thung zhig ces smras na / de las bzlog te bdud rtsi'i chu 'thung du bcug pa dang / sha bsregs nas za ru bcug pas tshim par gyur la bu mo la smras te / khyed gang nas 'ongs zhes so / / des smras pa / nags tshal chen po 'di'i dbus su yon tan dam pa'i tshogs kyis brgyan pa / thugs rje can dpal 'jam pa'i rdo rje ting nge 'dzin sgrub pa bdag gi bla ma bzhugs te / de nas 'ongs zhes so //

Upon merely hearing this (name), he (Śāntideva) felt a joyous relief, just like a poor person who has found a jewel. He said, "Wonderful, show him to me!" The girl invited him and led his horse as they went. When they arrived there, he saw the supreme master who, like a golden mountain, was pacified in body and speech and endowed with a very profound mind. He offered himself and his best horse and prostrated with devotion to this master. He requested (the master), "Please instruct me in the samādhi of Mañjughoṣa, accepting me (as your student)." The master instructed him in the stages of complete maturation, (giving him the

empowerments). (Śāntideva) stayed for twelve years, and through his samādhi he met Mañjughoṣa in actuality. Then, since the master commanded him to go to Madhyadeśa, he went.

de thos pa tsam gyis bkren pas rin po che thob la ltar dga' bde chen pos dbugs phyung nas smras te / kye de bdag la ston cig / bu mos de 'bod pa rta bzung ste gshegs par gyur to / / der phyin pas shin tu zab pa'i thugs dang ldan zhing / /lus ngag zhi ba gser gyi ri lta bu bla ma'i mchog mthong nas / bdag nyid dang rta mchog phul nas gus pas bla ma de la phyag byas te / 'jam pa'i dbyangs kyi ting nge 'dzin gyis gdams pas bdag rjes su 'dzin par 'tshal to / / zhes gsol te / / bla mas yang de yongs su smin par mdzad pa'i rim pas gdams par mdzad do / / des ni lo bcu gnyis der bzhugs la ting nge 'dzin gyis 'jam pa'i dbyangs mgnon sum du mdzad cing / / de rjes bla mas yul dbus su 'gro bar bka' stsal pas song ste /

He lived with only the dharma in mind, as someone who was respected by the king. He attended the king of Magadha while holding a wooden sword in its scabbard after the manner of a body guard [rta pa], and thus he was named Acalasena.

ma ga dha'i rgyal po rten cing shing gi ral gri shubs dang bcas pa bzung bas rta pa'i tshul mi g.yo ba'i sde zhes pa'i ming can rgyal pos bkur ba spyod pa di nyid kyis chos kho na yid la byed cing bzhugs so / /

Once, the other guards, unable to bear his success, complained to the king, "Since this Acalasena is attending you with a sword of wood, how might he strike at the enemy in case of a battle? Therefore, please examine his sword." As a result, and since (the king) could not speak directly to (Acalasena), he issued the command, "I will inspect the swords of all the guards!" After he had examined the swords of a few (guards, the king) commanded, "I will also inspect the sword of Acalasena!" (Acalasena) spoke, "It is not proper for you to examine my sword." Since the king insisted repeatedly, Acalasena said, "If you really want to examine it, then, alone in a remote location, cover one eye with your hand. Then look at it." When (the king) gazed upon it, due to the sword's radiance, the king's uncovered eye fell out onto the ground. Knowing that the king had become very devoted from seeing his power, he (Acalasena) re-inserted the eye into the eye-socket, relieving all his pain, and set out for the great monastery of Nālandā.

dus gzhan zhig na rta pa gzhan rnams kyis de'i phun sum tshogs pa mi bzad pas rgyal po la smras te / mi g.yo ba'i sde 'di ni shing gi ral gris khyed brten pas 'khrug pa'i dus su dgra la ji ltar rdeg par 'gyur / de bas na de'i ral gri blta bar 'tshal / de ltar yin yang drang por smra mi nus pas rta pa thams cad kyi ral gri blta bar bya'o / / zhes rgyal pos bka' stsal pas kha cig gis ral gri bltas nas / mi g.yo ba'i sde la yang ral gril blta'o zhes

bka' stsal to / / des gsungs pa / bdag gi ral gri khyed kyis blta bar mi 'os zhes so / / rgyal pos nan tan gyis yang dang yang du zhus pas mi g.yo ba na re cis kyang mthong bar 'dod na phyogs dben par khyed rang kho na lag pas mig gcig bkab ste / blta bar gyis shig de bltas pas ral gri'i gzi bzid kyis rgyal po'i mig ma bkab pa ngos sa la lhung ngo / / nus pa de mthong nas rgyal po shin tu mos par 'gyur bar dgongs la mig gi bu gar mig bcug ste / zug rngu med par byas la gtsug lag khang chen po nā lan dar gshegs la /

Acalasena took monastic ordination and received the name Śāntideva because he was so peaceful. Having contemplated at this (place) the tripiṭaka, he meditated continuously on luminosity, regardless of whether he was eating, sleeping, or strolling around. Therefore, as he dwelt in the samādhi known as 'Bhusuku' he became widely known as Bhusuku.

mi g.yo ba'i sde rab tu byung ste / / zhi ba dang ldan pas zhi ba'i lha zhes ming btags / der sde snod gsum mnyam pa'i rjes la za rung nyal rung 'chags rung rgyun tu 'od gsal bsgom pas bhu su ku zhes ting nge 'dzin la gnas pa'i phyir bhu su ku zhes ming yongs su grags so /

Then, at one time, evil-minded ones in the saṃgha, conspired thus: "This (Śāntideva) just acts like he meditates, but he is not performing any activities in the saṃgha. We must investigate what he (actually) knows."

de nas dus gzhan zhig na dge 'dun gyi nang du ma rungs pa 'ga' zhig gis / 'dis ni dge 'dun gyi nang du bya ba gang yang ma byas par sgom pa ltar gnas te / ci shes brtag dgos zhes bgros la /

They thought, "Since at the time of the first (month, when Buddha performed the) miracles, the dharma (scriptures) are to be recited, as (is done) every year, we must appoint him (to this task)." When they asked him, he replied, "I don't know anything." Although he refused them repeatedly, they kept requesting him. Outside the monastery in the north-eastern direction on a vast plain, they had arranged a variety of offerings. They summoned many people, set up a very high lion throne, and invited him.

dang po cho 'phrul gyi dus su lo re re zhing (bzhin?) chos 'don pa yod pas / 'di la 'chol dgos zhes bsams nas / de la zhus de gsungs pa bdag gi ci yang mi shes so / / yang nas yang du bkag kyang de dag gis zhus shing gtsug lhag khang gi phyir rol gyi dbang ldan gyi phyogs su sa phyogs yangs pa la mchod pa'i rnam pa du ma bshams te / skye bo ma lus pa bos nas seng ge'i khri shin tu mthon po bshams te spyan drangs so / /

Having taken his place there, (Śāntideva) pondered, "I have the three texts that I have composed, the Sūtra-samuccaya, the Śikṣā-samuccaya, and the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. It is suitable to recite the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra to them." He said, "Should I recite something taught (ārṣa = gsungs pa) by the Ṛṣi (the Buddha) or something that has arisen based on

him (arthārṣa = rjes las byung ba = bstan bcos)? The Ṛṣi is someone who has realized the ultimate truth. His teachings are the scriptures [gsung rab]. Based on these (scriptures), but constructed by others, are the treatises [rjes las byung ba = bstan bcos]."

des der bzhugs shing bsams te / mdo sde kun las btus pa dang / bslab pa kun las btus pa dang / byang chub spyod pa la 'jug pa zhes gzhung gsum bdag gis byas yod do / / de la spyod pa la 'jug po gdon par 'os zhes bsams nas gsungs te drang srong gis gsungs pa 'am / de'i rjes las byung ba gang gdon / don dam rtog(s) pa ni drang srong ngo / / des mdzad pa gsung rab bo / / de la brten nas gzhan gyi bya ba de rjes las byung ba'o /

As the Noble Maitreya said:

That which is endowed with meaning, endowed with the words of dharma,
Words that purify the afflictions of the three realms
And teach the benefits of peace,
(Are śāstras that have) arisen from the Ṛṣi. What contradicts these are the (writings) of others (tīrthikas).

This is also explained in the tenth chapter (in stanza 51):[1389]

Until I reach the (first bodhisattva) level of supreme joy,
Through the kindness of Mañjughoṣa,
May I always remember my former lives
And become a renunciate.[1390]

Thus, one should understand this.

'phags pa byams pas de gsungs pa /

gang gi don can chos kyi tshig dang ldan / /
khams gsum nyon mongs dag par byed pa'i tshig / /
zhi ba'i phan yon ston par byed pa de / /
drang srong las byung de las bzlog pa gzhan / / zhes so / /

des gang 'chad par 'gyur ba le'u bcu pa nas /

1389 For a commentary on this stanza see *kun dpal 'grel pa (si khron mi rigs edition)*, pages 798-799.

1390 Become a renunciate or receive ordination: A renunciate, someone who has 'gone forth' [rab byung / rab tu byung ba; skr. pravajyā], is someone who voluntarily left home and entered into a state of homelessness and connotes a monk who has taken the precepts of either a śrāmaṇera or a bhikṣu [khyim nas khyim med par rab tu byung ba ste dge tshul slong gi sdom pa blangs pa'i grva pa]. See *Sound of Two Hands Clapping*, pages 33-37.

> bdag kyang 'jam dbyangs bka' drin gyis / /
> sa rab dga' ba thob bar du / /
> rtag tu tshe rabs dran par dang / /
> rab tu 'byung ba'ang thob par shog /

ces pa de yang rig par 'gyur ro /

> They were (all) amazed and spoke up, "Please recite (something composed by) another. Then (Śāntideva) began (to recite) the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. The Noble Mañjuśrī appeared in the sky in front of him, so that all (present) could actually see him just when (Śāntideva) recited:
>
> When neither an 'entity' nor a 'non-entity'
> Remains before the mind,
> At that point, since there is no other position,
> It rests in utter peace, without any conceptualizing.
>
> Then, (Śāntideva) together with (Mañjuśrī) became invisible (to the) people. People who regretted that they no longer could see him examined his room and found the three (texts), the Sūtra-samuccaya and (the two) others. Through these (three texts), the scholars made him famous throughout the world.
>
> de dad gi ngo mtshar skyes nas smras te / gzhan pa 'don par zhu 'tshal ces brjod pa dang / des kyang spyod pa la 'jug par brtsams so / de la
>
> gang tshe dgnos dang dngos min dag /
> blo yi mdun du mi gnas 'gyur / /
> de tshe rnam pa gzhan med par / /
> dmigs pa med par rab tu zhi / /
>
> zhes bya ba 'don pa'i skabs su de la mthong lam mngon du gyur ba dang / 'phags pa 'jam dpal mdun gyi nam mkha' la snang / / de'i rjes la de dang bcas pa skye bo rnams la mi snang bar gyur / de nas de ma mthong bas 'gyod par gyur pa'i skye bo rnams kyis de'i brang khang du bltas pas / mdo sde kun las btus pa la sogs pa gsum blangs te / mkhas pa rnams kyis sgo nas 'jig rten du grags par byas so /

Text section 97:

Following the accounts of Śāntideva's biography, Khenpo Kunpal turns to a series of praises paying homage to Śāntideva's bodhisattva qualities. The first master quoted, *Jetāri*[1391] [dze ta ri], was a great Indian scholar of Mādhyamaka as well as a logician.

1391 For biographical notes on Jetāri [dze ta ri] see *Tāranātha's History of Buddhism*, pages 290-292 and *Crystal Mirror Vol. VIII*, page 393.

Prajñākaramati[1392] [shes rab 'byung gnas blo gros] was a scholar from the Buddhist universtiy Vikramaśīla and belongs to the famous grouping of the six paṇḍitas of the gates [mkhas pa'i sgo drug]. According to Tāranātha's History of Buddhism,[1393] Prajñākaramati was the keeper of the southern gate; according to the Blue Annals,[1394] he was the keeper of the western gate.

Prajñākaramati was a great scholar in Mādhyamaka philosophy and the Prajñāpāramitā scriptures, and he wrote a famous commentary on the Bodhicaryāvatāra.[1395] This is the only commentary still extant in the Sanskrit language on the Bodhicaryāvatāra. In the preface to his commentary, Prajñākaramati refers to Śāntideva as 'This noble Śāntideva' ['phags pa zhi ba'i lha de].[1396]

Another master who extols Śāntideva's qualities is the Indian scholar *Vibhūticandra'*.[1397] The quote comes from the metrical preface to his commentary on the Bodhicaryāvatāra:[1398]

> In the (history of) the Victor's doctrine
> Many great beings and persons have appeared,
> But I have found none whose
> Experience and realization compare with Śāntideva's.
>
> rgyal ba'i bstan pa bdag nyid che
> skyes bu mang po byin (byon) mod kiy
> zhi ba'i lha yi mdzad dang 'dra / (mdzad pa 'dra)
> nyams dang dgongs pa can mi rnyed

The *master Kṛṣṇapāda* [slob dpon nag po pa] wrote in the metrical preface to his commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra the following:[1399]

> He who for a long time has utterly dedicated himself to meditation with
> the power of faith and diligence,

1392 For biographical notes on Prajñākaramati [shes rab 'byung gnas blo gros] see *Tāranātha's History of Buddhism*, pages 296-297. As *kun dpal 'grel pa* reads only Prajñākara [shes rab 'byung gnas], one should not confuse Prajñākaramati with Prajñākaragupta [shes rab 'byung gnas sbab pa].

1393 See *Tāranātha's History of Buddhism*, page 295.

1394 See *Blue Annals*, page 206.

1395 See *sher 'byung bka' 'grel*.

1396 See *sher 'byung bka' 'grel*, page 1, folio 45b5.

1397 For biographical notes on Vibhūticandra see *mkhas btsun bzang po Vol. I*, pages 867-868.

1398 See *vibhūti dgongs 'grel*, page 236, folio 229b.

1399 See *kṛṣṇa dka' gnas*, page 186, folio 106b1-2.

And who has also touched the supreme crown of his head to the lotus at Mañjughoṣa's feet,[1400]
Who has been praised by the scholars to be the second Mañjughoṣa on earth, the author of this treatise,
In order to praise him, I will scatter with my mind a handful of the flowers of devotion.

yun ring dad dang brtson pa'i stobs kyis bsam grtan mchog la rab gzhol zhing /
gang gi spyi gtsug mchog gis 'jam dbyangs zhabs kyi pad ma la reg pa /
sa steng 'jam dbyangs gnyis pa yin zhes mkhas pa rnams kyis bstod pa bstan bcos rtsom pa po /
bstod phyir bdag gis yid kyis dad pa'i me tog snyim pa bkang bas 'thor /

It is very beneficial to recite praises such as these as part of one's study of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra in order to immerse one's mind in the stream of Śāntideva's blessings and bodhisattva qualities.

Text section 99:

The second preliminary assessment through which scholars in the tradition of Nālandā University examine a Buddhist treatise is to ask, "*Upon which scriptures does it draw?*" Śāntideva based his treatise on the tripiṭaka in general and in particular on the Mahāyāna sūtra piṭaka. All Buddhist treatises must be in accord with the Buddha's teachings [lung dang mthun pa], because only the Buddha is utterly free from any ego-clinging [bdag 'dzin]. A treatise that fails to prove its reliance on the Buddha's teachings [lung] is considered as being 'without source, without basis' [khung med lung med] and is not considered beneficial for the path to liberation and omniscience. As one great scholar said, "All that is true and beneficial is the teaching of the Buddha" [bden pa dang phan 'dogs pa gang yin pa sangs rgyas kyi gsung].

The Buddha's teachings bestow both temporary [gnas skabs kyi phan pa] and ultimate benefits [mthar thug gi phan pa]. They are true both on the level of relative truth [kun rdzob gyi bden pa] and on the level of absolute truth [don dam gyi bden pa]. The teaching of the Buddha is that which expounds the genuine path to liberation [thar pa] and omniscience [thams cad mkhyen pa]. The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra belongs to the Mahāyāna sūtra teachings.

Text section 100:

1400 The soles of Mañjuśrīghoṣa's feet are marked with the design of a lotus [pad ma'i ri mo]. The phrase means that Śāntideva constantly meditates on Mañjuśrīghoṣa above his head.

The third preliminary assessment asks, *"Under which category is it classified?"* The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is classified as a Mahāyāna treatise. The Mahāyāna teachings include both sūtra [mdo] and mantra [sngags]. *Mantra* [sngags] or Mantrayāna is identical with the vehicle of tantra or Vajrayāna.

The Nyingma School structures the Buddha's entire teaching in an ascending sequence of nine vehicles [theg pa rim pa dgu]: 1) śrāvakayāna [nyan thos kyi theg pa], 2) pratyekabuddhayāna [rang rgyal ba'i theg pa], 3) bodhisattvayāna [byang chub sems dpa'i theg pa], 4) kriyatantra [bya ba'i rgyud kyi theg pa], 5) ubhayatantra [upa'i rgyud kyi theg pa], 6) yogatantra [rnal 'byor gyi rgyud kyi theg pa], 7) mahāyoga [rnal 'byor chen po'i theg pa], 8) anuyoga [rjes su rnal 'byor gyi theg pa], and 9) atiyoga, also known as the Great Perfection [rdzogs pa chen po shin tu rnal 'byor gyi theg pa]. These nine vehicles are distinguished according to their unique teachings on view [lta], meditation [sgom], conduct [spyod], and fruition ['bras].

A practitioner of Secret Mantra Vajrayāna and particularly of the Great Perfection will study and practice the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra as an enhancement ['bog 'don gyi tshul du] for his practice and also as a method for clearing away obstacles [bgegs bsal gyi tshul du] that arise in the course of his practice. Thus, the gradual path of sūtra and the instantaneous path of Secret Mantra can be practiced as a perfect unity, seamlessly integrated with one another. The teachings of the Great Perfection train you in the perfect view while at the same time the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra educates you in the perfect conduct of the six transcendental perfections.

Sūtra or Sūtrayāna is also called the 'causal vehicle of (the six) transcendental perfections' [rgyu pha rol phyin pa'i theg pa], while tantra is called the 'resultant vehicle of mantra' ['bras bu sngags kyi theg pa]. The Buddhist tradition actually speaks of 'three causal vehicles' [rgyu mtshan nyid kyi theg pa]. These refer to the śrāvakayāna, the pratyekabuddhayāna [rang rgyal ba'i theg pa], and the bodhisattvayāna.

The followers of the causal vehicles [rgyu'i theg pa / rgyu mtshan nyid kyi theg pa] practice as their path the causes (for enlightenment), which are the six transcendental perfections [phar phyin drug rgyu lam du byed pa]. The followers of the resultant vehicle, also called the 'vehicle of secret mantra' [gsang sngags kyi theg pa], practice the fruition as the path ['bras bu lam du byed pa]. As Düjom Rinpoche explained:[1401]

> Therefore, in the vehicle of attributes [mtshan nyid kyi theg pa], mind nature is merely perceived as the causal basis for buddhahood. Since it is held that buddhahood is obtained through the condition that the two accumulations increasingly multiply, and since the purifying teachings [rnam byang gi chos] which form the causal basis of nirvāṇa are made into the path, it is called the causal vehicle. Therein, a sequence in which cause precedes result is admitted.

[1401] *Nyingmapa School of Tibetan Buddhism*, page 244 / folio 125a.

> According to the vehicle of mantra, on the other hand, mind nature abides primordially and intrinsically as the essence of the result ['bras bu'i ngo bo], endowed with kayas and wisdom [sku dang ye shes kyi bdag nyid can]. Since the aim [thob bya], (mind nature), thereby exists within oneself from the very present moment, it is the ground. By recognizing it, temporary and momentary stains are removed. Thus, the recognition is the path [ngo shes par byed pa'i cha nas lam]. When this ground is actualized [mngon du gyur pa'i cha nas], it is the fruition. Since the sequence in which cause precedes result is not really distinguished therein, it is called the resultant vehicle.

The causal vehicle of the six transcendental perfections is an unimaginably long path to enlightenment. The Mahāyāna path to complete enlightenment is generally said to require three countless aeons to complete. The resultant vehicle of mantra is in comparison an infinitely swifter path to complete enlightenment. It is said that a person of highest capacity can reach perfect enlightenment in this very lifetime. A person of average capacity is said to be able to reach enlightenment at the time of the intermediate state [bar do], and a person of lowest capacity within thirteen or sixteen lifetimes. Thus, considering the timespan necessary to attain enlightenment, the Sūtrayāna path can be classified as the gradual approach [rim gyis pa], and the Secret Mantra Vajrayāna as the instantaneous approach [gcig char ba].

The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is a text of the gradual path to enlightenment. Study and practice of the sūtra teachings of the Buddha follow a gradual sequence [go rim], and so the practitioner must know which stage of study and practice he has reached.

The distinction between Hīnayāna and Mahāyāna can also be made in terms of the vastness of the scope of one's motivation. While the Hīnayāna practitioner strives to liberate only himself, the Mahāyāna practitioner strives to establish all sentient beings at the level of complete enlightenment.

A follower of the Hīnayāna path has a limited motivation [bsam pa rgya chung ba] and a limited aspiration [mos pa rgya chung ba]. Such a person understands the defects of saṃsāra ['khor ba'i skyon] and the qualities of nirvāṇa [myang 'das kyi yon tan]. He has become disgusted with saṃsāra ['khor ba la yid phyung] yet is not undertaking the benefit of others and instead is striving to achieve the level of peace [zhi ba] and cessation ['gog pa] for himself alone. Thus, his character [rigs], motivation [bsam pa], and aspiration [mos pa] are quite limited.

In contrast to this narrow scope of mind, a follower of the Mahāyāna path is someone endowed with a vast motivation [bsam pa rgya che ba] and a vast aspiration [mos pa rgya che ba]. This type of person generates the noble thought to reach unexcelled and perfect enlightenment [bla med rdzogs pa'i byang chub] for the sake of all sentient beings. Such persons are happy to engage, even for countless aeons, in the boundless trainings of perfecting, ripening, and purifying [rdzogs smin sbyang gsum].

A Mahāyāna practitioner wishes to entirely perfect the two accumulations [tshogs gnyis yongs su rdzogs pa], the accumulation of merit and the accumulation of wisdom. He

wishes to ripen his being [rgyud smin pa], to let his ordinary body, speech, and mind ripen into the qualities of the Buddha's three kāyas [lus ngag yid gsum sku gsum gyi yon tan du smin pa]. Furthermore, he trains to purify the two obscurations [sgrib gnyis sbyang ba], obscurations of affliction [nyon mongs pa'i sgrib pa] and obscurations of cognition [shes bya'i sgrib pa].

The practice path of a Mahāyāna practitioner is understood through two fundamental classifications: the profound [zab pa] and the vast [rgya che ba]. The 'profound' is the complete realization of both types of egolessness [bdag med]. The 'vast' means that one has embarked upon the boundless trainings of the ten bodhisattva levels [sa bcu], of the five paths [lam lnga], and of the six perfections [phar phyin drug]. Thus, one is practicing the unity of 'profound knowledge' [zab pa'i shes rab] and 'vast skillful means' [rgya che ba'i thabs mkhas].

A true follower of the Mahāyāna path is not intimidated by the defects of worldly existence, the three realms of saṃsāra [srid pa khams gsum 'khor ba].[1402] Nor does he aspire to attain the qualities of the peace of nirvāṇa [zhi ba mya ngan las 'das pa], the truth of cessation ['gog bden]. Rather, he aspires to attain a state of equanimity beyond hope and fear, beyond rejection and expectation, beyond aversion and attachment; in other words, to achieve actual and perfect buddhahood [mngon par rdzogs par sangs rgyas pa], the fruition of nirvāṇa beyond abiding [mi gnas pa'i mya ngan las 'das pa]. 'Nirvāṇa beyond abiding' means that one neither abides in the extreme of saṃsāric existence [srid pa 'khor ba'i mtha'] nor in the extreme of peaceful nirvāṇa [zhi ba myang 'das kyi mtha']. The extreme of peaceful nirvāṇa is the attainment of Hīnayāna. The nirvāṇa of Mahāyāna, however, is beyond extremes of any kind.

Mahāyāna [theg pa chen po] is further said to surpass Hīnayāna [theg pa dman pa] through a seven-fold superiority [chen po bdun]:[1403]

1) The superiority of its scope or focus [dmigs pa chen po]: Mahāyāna surpasses Hināyāna through the scope of its teachings and the scope of its topics. The scope of its teachings encompasses the complete teachings of the Buddha [rjod byed bka' yongs su rdzogs pa], including the immeasurable bodhisattva piṭaka. The scope of its topic [brjod byed] covers boundless profound [zab pa] and vast [rgya che ba] meanings. Mahāyāna is profound since both types of egolessness are realized. Mahāyāna is vast since it encompasses all the trainings of the ten bodhisattva levels, the five paths, and the six perfections.
2) The superiority in practice [sgrub pa chen po]: Mahāyāna surpasses Hināyāna since one practices in order to accomplish the welfare of all sentient beings, one's own welfare as well as the welfare of others. While Hināyāna teaches how to accomplish liberation for oneself, Mahāyāna teaches how to accomplish the temporary and ultimate happiness of all sentient beings.

1402 las kyi 'bras bu smin tshar ba la srid pa zer

1403 For details see *mi pham mkhas 'jug*, pages 260-261.

3) The superiority in wisdom [ye shes chen po]: Mahāyāna surpasses Hināyāna since, completely realizing the two types of egolessness, one reaches a personal [so so] and non-conceptual [spros bral] realization in which emptiness and compassion are a unity.
4) The superiority in diligence [brtson 'grus chen po]: Mahāyāna surpasses Hināyāna,[1404] since (in Mahāyāna) one embarks for three countless aeons [bskal pa grangs med gsum] and more[1405] on perfecting [rdzogs], ripening [smin], and purifying [sbyang].
5) The superiority in skillful means [thabs la mkhas pa chen po]: Mahāyāna surpasses Hināyāna since, training in the path that neither abides in worldly existence nor in nirvāṇic peace, one perfects one's own path without forsaking even a single being. Journeying through these five points of superiority is called 'the vehicle of the path' [lam gyi theg pa].
6) The superiority in perfect achievement [yang dag 'grub pa chen po]: Mahāyāna surpasses Hināyāna since one accomplishes the immeasuable qualities [chos] of the Buddha such as the ten powers [stobs bcu], the four kinds of fearlessness [mi 'jigs pa bzhi], the eighteen non-associated qualities [ma 'dres pa bco brgyad], and so forth. 'The superiority in perfect achievement' connotes perfect buddhahood, endowed with boundless qualities.
7) The superiority in enlightened activity [sangs rgyas kyi phrin las chen po]: Mahāyāna surpasses Hināyāna since, for as long as saṃsāra exists, one embarks on unceasing activities to benefit all sentient beings. The 'superiority in enlightened activity' refers to the unceasing activities of buddhas. Having journeyed to these two (final) points of superiority is called 'the fruitional vehicle' ['bras bu'i theg pa].

Text section 101:

The fourth preliminary assessment asks, "*What is the brief meaning of it from beginning to end?*" The 'brief meaning from beginning to end' refers to the entire Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, beginning with 'In the Indian language…' [rgya gar skad du] up through '…thus completed' [rdzogs so]. The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra explains in great detail how to train one's mind in the motivation of bodhicitta and how to practice the actual application of the six transcendental perfections. The development of bodhicitta refers to the bodhicitta of aspiration [smon pa sems bskyed] and to the bodhicitta of application ['jug pa sems bskyed]. The text teaches the methods necessary to expand one's mind, to make it vast; this expansion of mind is central to developing bodhicitta.

[1404] A practitoner of the Hināyāna path might attain arhatship in one life time, in three or in seven.

[1405] Those of highest capacities need three countless aeons to attain perfect enlightenment through the Mahāyāna path, those of mediocre capacity need seven countless aeons and those of lowest capacities need thirty-three countless aeons.

The untrained mind of an ordinary being is limited [gu dogs po], while the mind of a bodhisattva is vast and open [rgya chad gu yangs]. In general, ordinary beings tend to think and act in terms of their personal benefit. In marked contrast, a bodhisattva is concerned exclusively with the welfare and happiness of all sentient beings. The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is an unfailing guide to the process of expanding one's mind from self-absorbed preoccupation with one's personal benefit [rang don] into a state of vast, selfless mind principally concerned with benefiting others [gzhan don]. If one really understands its true depth, the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra clearly shows how one's mind can ultimately become as vast as the sky.

In short, one might summarize simply by saying that the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra concerns only bodhicitta. Bodhicitta is given such central importance since it is indispensable for attaining enlightenment. This, in brief, is the meaning of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra.

The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra shows in a very practical way how to develop and implement or apply bodhicitta. It clearly shows us how to actually practice the six transcendental perfections, the six pāramitās. Whoever follows the practice of first developing bodhicitta, second, the process of knowing how to protect against its degeneration, and third, the process of allowing it to develop further and further is truly following the path of the bodhisattvas.

Text section 102:

The fifth and final preliminary assessment asks, "*For whose benefit and for what purpose was it composed?*" This assessment is intended to reveal the true intention of the author and asks why he wrote the treatise. The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra addresses in general all sentient beings and in particular the five hundred scholars of Nālandā University. Its purpose is to guarantee that the path of the precious bodhicitta is practiced in a complete and unmistaken way.

People may compose books and treatises for various reasons and with considerably different motivations. This book was written out of great love for everyone and intends to benefit all beings in the best of all possible ways. When the methods outlined in this book are integrated with one's own experience and practice, all one's actions become both meaningful and beneficial, whether drinking a cup of tea, speaking with someone, or anything else one may do. Once a person is infused with the spirit of bodhicitta, life is meaningful and beneficial in every respect.

In a deeper sense, this text is actually preparing the student to recognize profound emptiness, the immutable meaning of the natural state [chos nyid mi g.yo ba'i don]. A genuine scholar must be learned and accomplished in the meaning of profound emptiness, not merely well-versed in the superfical use of the words. As it is said:

> Knowledge of words does not make one a scholar.
> Knowing the immutable meaning makes one a true scholar.

tshig la mkhas pa mkhas pa ma yin te
mi g.yo don la mkhas pa mkhas pa yin

Once all the five preliminary assessments have been properly established, the student will have certainly gained confidence in the teaching to be given and will have thus been transformed into a proper vessel for receiving the teachings.

Text sections 103-104:

Khenpo Kunpal now explains how a student should listen to the dharma with proper motivation and conduct. A student of the dharma should know how to listen to the teachings properly. This includes a particular motivation and a particular conduct when receiving teachings. If you do not know the correct way of listening to the teachings, even if you receive one hundred teachings from one hundred great masters, they will not benefit you. The teaching are designed to benefit your mind, to cause a transformation in your being. A single teaching might have such an effect on you, if you receive it with the proper motivation and the proper conduct.

Motivation is the reason or the purpose for doing something. Try to be clear about why you are listening to the teachings of the Buddha, why you are studying and practicing the dharma. Look into your mind and examine your motives and reasons. Are you listening to the teachings because you want to become a scholar of high repute? Are you practicing and studying because you want to become a teacher and want to make a living from the dharma? Do you want to make a university career by studying the dharma? Are you sitting in the teachings because it is a social event that is enjoyable to join? If such motives as these are your reasons for practicing and studying the dharma, then all your efforts will be useless from the onset.

Virtue [dge ba] and noble intention [bsam pa bzang po] are the essence of the dharma. Bodhicitta is the most noble intention of all. If your motivation for listening to the teachings is egocentric and less than noble, you are contravening the essence of the dharma and the teachings will therefore never transform your being. The teachings of the Buddha will then be reduced to a mere academic lecture. If, on the other hand, bodhicitta—a mindset of compassion [snying rje] and wisdom knowledge [shes rab]—is your motivation to listen to the teachings, to study and practice the dharma, your mind is virtuous and open to the effects of the dharma. Generate the attitude: "I will listen to this teaching in order to liberate all sentient beings from their suffering and to establish them on the level of perfect enlightenment."

With compassion, focus on benefiting others [snying rjes gzhan don la dmigs pa] through the steadfast resolve: "I will listen to the dharma in order to free all beings from suffering." This is the compassion aspect of the bodhicitta motivation. With knowledge, focus on perfect enlightenment [shes rab kyis rdzogs byang la dmigs pa] through the similar resolve: "I will listen to the dharma in order to establish all sentient beings on the level of perfect enlightenment." Bodhicitta must always incorporate these two aspects of compasssion and wisdom-knowledge.

If even a single stanza [tshigs su bcad pa gcig] of the dharma has truly penetrated your heart, this teaching will never leave your mind and will stay with you throughout this entire lifetime and all future lives to come. Listening wholeheartedly to a single teaching is much more beneficial than sitting for weeks and months absent-mindedly in retreat.

Furthermore, generate a joyous mindset whenever you have the chance to listen, study or practice the dharma. Think, "I have attained the precious human body endowed with eight freedoms and ten advantages. I have now met a qualified teacher. Now I have the opportunity to receive teachings from him. I am truly blessed."

The motivation of a great person always embraces the bodhicitta intent to liberate all sentient beings. Bodhicitta is both the *entrance way* ['jug ngogs] to the accumulation of immeasurable merit as well as the source ['byung gnas / yong sa] of such merit. Here one must remember that throughout infinite past lifetimes ['das pa'i dus mtha' med pa], all sentient beings have at one time or another been one's parents. The Buddha said that no single being exists who has not at one time been your father and your mother.

In order to start to bring all these intimate relationships from former lifetimes to mind, first reflect upon the great kindness shown to you by your present parents, especially your mother. She carried you in her womb for nine months. She gave birth to you and fed you at her breast. She taught you how to speak, how to walk, and how to interact with others. She always guarded you against any possible danger. She nursed you when you were ill. During countless nights she did not sleep in order to care for you.

For years, when you were small and helpless, your parents carried you around and looked after you. They held your life to be more precious than their own. They fed and clothed you, protected you against heat and cold. They educated you and taught you how to survive in this world. When they were old or when they died, they left whatever they had as an inheritance, enabling you to live more comfortably. All of this they did out of great love and kindness for you.

It is important to know that all beings have at one time been your parents and have cared for you with exactly the same affection as your present parents. Therefore, you should extend your gratitude to all sentient beings. We are not exalted beings with supernatural perception, so we cannot really see what a close connection we have with all other sentient beings. At this point, we simply must come to trust in the word of the Buddha, who told us very clearly that all beings have been our parents.

Since we remain unaware of these intimate past ties, we continue to behave unkindly toward other beings. Although all beings aspire to happiness, they continue to create the causes for further suffering by engaging in the ten non-virtuous actions. They do not know that the real cause for happiness is to follow the dharma. 'Dharma' means behaving in a way that accords with the ten virtuous actions. Bringing to mind the causes of suffering and miserable conditions which all mother-like sentient beings bring upon themselves, and developing compassion for them, is called 'focusing with compassion on the welfare of others' [snying rjes gzhan don la dmigs pa].

Text section 105:

Being ignorant about what actually causes our own states of happiness, we need to rely on a spiritual friend [dge ba'i bshes gnyen, skr. kalyāṇamitra] who educates us in the initial stages of the path, telling us what actions we should undertake and what we should avoid. Without a spiritual friend, we are like blind people lost in the desert. A blind person needs a guide to reach his destination, and likewise we need a spiritual friend to show us the path to happiness, liberation, and omniscience.

Text section 106:

We have achieved a favorable rebirth, met with the dharma, and with qualified teachers. Having met with such good fortune, our intention should be to strive to free all our former mothers, all sentient beings, from their suffering, and to establish them on the level of omniscient and perfect buddhahood.

All sentient beings are completely caught up in their *individual karmic perceptions within the six realms* [rigs drug so so'i las snang]. Beings in each of the six realms share a common karmic perception, while at the same time each has his own individual experience, his own particular hopes and fears, happiness and sorrow. The six afflictions are the direct causes that propel beings into birth in one of the six realms. According to which of the six afflictions predominates in the mind-streams of beings, they take rebirth in one of the six realms.

The three lower realms are the hell realm, the hungry ghost realm, and the animal realm. Anger [zhe sdang] is the main cause for taking rebirth in the hell realm; stinginess [ser sna] leads to rebirth in the realm of the hungry ghosts, the preta realm; and ignorance or delusion [gti mug] results in rebirth in the animal realm.

The three higher realms include the human realm, the asura or demi-god realm, and the celestial realm of the gods. Desire ['dod chags] is the major cause for rebirth in the human realm; jealousy [phrag dog] is the force that hurls us into birth among the asura demi-gods; and when pride [nga rgyal] dominates it leads to rebirth in the realm of the gods. These are the 'six karmic perceptions' [las snang drug], the six varieties of karmic perception experienced by sentient beings, and each realm possesses its own unique types of suffering.

Beings in hell are tormented by the suffering of heat and cold [tsha grang gi sdug bsgnal]. Pretas suffer from hunger and thirst [bkres skom gyi sdug bsngal]; animals are afflicted by delusion and ignorance; human beings must endure birth, aging, disease, and death [skye rga na 'chi'i sdug bsngal]; demi-gods are tormented by incessant quarreling and fighting ['thab rtsod gyi sdug bsngal]; and even the gods experience tremendous sorrow at the approach of death and during the process of dying ['chi 'pho ba'i sdug bsngal].

Another result of beings experiencing their *individual karmic perceptions within the six realms* is that different beings perceive the same setting and situation in different ways. Where a human being sees a bowl of water, a hell being will perceive molten bronze.

Pretas would see the water as blood and pus, and beings of the god realms would see a vessel filled with the nectar of immortality. Some beings in the animal realm experience water as the environment in which they live.

A bodhisattva has the confidence [spobs pa] and the commitment [dam bca' ba] to state, "I will free all beings, my mothers, from their individual karmic perceptions, suffering, and habitual tendencies for each of the six realms, and I will establish them on the level of omniscient and perfect buddhahood." That commitment succinctly summarizes the bodhicitta of aspiration.

Without having truly recognized one's own mind essence, non-dual wisdom [gnyis su med pa'i ye shes], profound emptiness [zab mo stong pa nyid], one will be unable to truly generate such confidence and commitment. Until mind essence is genuinely recognized and this unshakeable confidence gained, developing bodhicitta remains more of an aspiration [smon lam] than a commitment [dam bca'].

As noted above, bodhicitta has two inseparable aspects, compassion [snying rje] and knowledge [shes rab]. 'Compassion' here means focusing on the benefit of others [snying rjes gzhan don la dmigs pa] through the commitment: "I will free all beings from their suffering." 'Knowledge' means focusing on perfect enlightenment [shes rab kyis rdzogs byang la dmigs pa] through the commitment: "I will establish all sentient beings on the level of perfect enlightenment."

The dharma should be practiced while being endowed with four links ['brel ba bzhi ldan]: (1) Link your mind to the earnest wish [rang gi sems 'dun pa dang 'brel ba], thinking, "May all sentient beings be free from both the causes and the fruition of suffering." (2) Then link your mind to the aspiration [rang gi sems smon pa dang 'brel ba], thinking, "Wouldn't it be nice if all sentient beings were free of suffering." (3) Then link your mind to the resolve [rang gi sems dam bca' dang 'brel ba], thinking, "I will free all sentient beings from suffering."

Having made these three links, (4) link your mind to the supplication [rang gi sems gsol 'debs dang 'brel], supplicating the three jewels, the undeluded refuge, which are free from both the causes and fruition of suffering, thinking, "Please free my own mothers, all sentient beings, from their suffering, its causes and fruitions. Free them right now, as I am sitting at this very place, at this very spot."

A beginner who attempts to develop bodhicitta might be intimidated by the magnitude of the thought: "I will establish all beings on the level of complete enlightenment," thinking, "How could someone like me ever do that? I'm not enlightened in any way. I don't have the knowledge and power it takes to free beings from their suffering and lead them to enlightenment. I cannot even give temporary happiness to a few people. How could I ever bestow ultimate happiness on all sentient beings?"

An honest beginner knows his shortcomings and so can only practice bodhicitta as an aspiration. Rather than state the commitment to free all beings, he should make the aspiration, "May I free all beings from suffering and establish them on the level of complete enlightenment." This crucial distinction is also a key point in knowing how

to appoach the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. At first, one should study and practice the entire text as an aspiration and a supplication. As part of this process, one begins to apply the various methods for generating merit taught in the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra.

In addition, seeking out qualified masters and receiving instructions on how to recognize one's buddha nature, the non-conceptual wisdom [dmigs pa med pa'i ye shes] is most important. After genuninely recognizing the essence of one's own mind, practicing the commitment [dam bca' ba] of bodhicitta becomes a reality. Growing increasingly confident in one's bodhicitta commitment also greatly enhances one's practice of the buddha nature. One's bodhicitta commitment and the recognition of buddha nature mutually enhance one another.

Genuine recognition of buddha nature is the practice of knowledge [shes rab] or wisdom [ye shes] and gives rise to a natural compassion [snying rje]. Knowledge and compassion inspire and enhance one another. This mutually enhancing quality of knowledge and compassion sets in motion the natural turning of the wheel of dharma. Great compassion allows knowledge [shes rab] to dawn; great knowledge [shes rab] allows genuine compassion to dawn. This illustrates very clearly the interdependent nature [rten 'brel] of knowledge and compassion.

The teachings of the Buddha all point to emptiness, and emptiness [stong pa nyid] is recognized by wisdom [ye shes]. Yet within this recognition of emptiness, there is no distinguishing or focus upon any subject [yul can] or any object [yul]. It is a non-dual wisdom [gnyis su med pa'i ye shes], a wisdom unconditioned by perceptual constraints of a subject-object dichotomy. As long as a perceptual dichotomy of a subject and an object exists, emptiness [stong pa nyid] has not been recognized.

Those who have attained the states of śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas are genuinely endowed with great compassion. Both śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas have realized the egolessness of personal identity [gang zag gi bdag med]; the pratyekabuddhas have also partially realized the egolessness of phenomena [chos kyi bdag med]. A practitioner who has realized egolessness will naturally feel compassion for all beings who, due to grasping at a non-existent 'self', still dwell in confusion. Both śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas understand that the root of suffering is our involvment with afflictions and that afflictions spring from ego-clinging.

Since they clearly understand beings' confusion, they cannot help but feel compassion for them. Nevertheless, they lack bodhicitta. Seeing clearly the defects of saṃsāra and the qualities of nirvāṇa, they aspire only to become śrāvaka-arhats or pratyekabuddha-arhats. As they do not aspire to perfect enlightenment even for themselves, they definitely do not aspire to establish all sentient beings on the level of perfect enlightenment.

The dharma places great importance on finding *a qualified master* [mtshan ldan gyi bla ma]. No sūtra, śāstra, or tantra speaks of any being ever attaining perfect buddhahood without having followed a spiritual teacher. However, before requesting dharma from a teacher it is extremely important to examine his qualities. This is especially true at present, when many have become disillusioned with spiritual teachers. Such

disillusionment results from beginning students not knowing how to examine their teachers. Students must read and reflect on the manuals that describe the qualities of a perfect teacher. These books also provide guidelines on how to detect a false spiritual teacher. Following such advice, students can discover a teacher's qualities before placing their trust in the teacher. Thus, the negative karma of disillusionment and resentment can be avoided. Faith without discrimination is dangerous.

A qualified teacher of sūtra and tantra must be endowed with many qualities, particularly perfect kindness, compassion, and wisdom. He should be well-versed in the teachings and practices of the tripiṭaka, as well as in the four sections of tantra. He should have actualized all extraordinary qualities of realization in himself by having experienced the meaning of the teachings.

Briefly, a genuine teacher should be generous; his speech and language should be pleasant; he should teach each individual according to that person's needs; and especially, he should act in conformity with what he teaches. He should be able to impart the true meaning of profound emptiness to his students. At the same time, he must be free from the pursuit of the eight worldly concerns and live a life of simplicity. At the very least, anyone who claims to teach Mahāyāna Buddhism must have studied, practiced, and developed bodhicitta.

The eight worldly concerns ['jig rten chos brgyad] are: gain [rnyed pa] and loss [ma rnyed pa]; fame [snyan] and disrepute [mi snyan]; praise [bstod pa] and blame [smad pa]; and pleasure [bde ba] and pain [mi bde ba]. These eight points describe the egocentric goals and fears of a worldly person. If a person pursues egocentric aims in thought and deed, he is not following the Buddha's teachings. If one is motivated in thought and deed by personal gain, fame, and so on, one is inwardly an ordinary worldly person, however one may appear outwardly. Being motivated by the eight worldly concerns takes one far from the practice of the Mahāyāna path, and farther still from the Vajrayāna path.

Dharma students who join a shedra, an institute for Buddhist studies, must understand that it is not a worldly institution. This has to do with the teacher-student relationship. A qualified Buddhist teacher is someone who has transformed his own character and mind. A qualified student of Buddhism is someone who aspires to this same transformation of character. A qualified teacher must accept responsibility for the spiritual development of his student. A qualified student must respectfully acknowledge the teacher as someone who shows the path to enlightenment. The teacher and the sublime dharma he teaches must be treated with the utmost respect. Such a teacher-student relationship endures for many lifetimes.

Thus, the situation in a traditional institution of Buddhist learning is entirely different than when Buddhism is taught in an ordinary university. In the latter case, neither the teacher nor the student need be Buddhist. In an ordinary university neither the teachers nor the students necessarily regard the dharma as sublime and sacred. The sublime dharma instead becomes 'an interesting field of study'. In ordinary

universities, students pay their tuition fees and study under teachers in order to receive an academic degree that may serve their own personal advancement.

The ordinary university professor assumes the responsibility to turn his students into skilled scholars. He lacks the inner knowledge as well as the capacity to take responsibility for the student's ethical and spiritual development. Such a teacher-student relationship is limited and very short-term. Newcomers to shedras first need to learn to become suitable vessels for the dharma. They need to understand the nuances of receiving sacred knowledge and of how to behave toward sublime spiritual teachers.

When Khenpo Kunpal mentions the *genuine dharma* [yang dag pa'i chos], he is referring to teachings like 'Entering the Conduct of the Bodhisattvas' [spyod 'jug]. When a qualified master teaches the genuine dharma to a qualified student, realization should be born in the student's mind. Therefore, the sublime dharma, the genuine teachings of the Buddha, are the most precious treasure in the entire universe; even the wish-fulfilling jewel cannot produce realization in the mind of a student.

The quintessence of all dharma teachings is *wisdom* [ye shes]. Whoever imparts to you the gift of wisdom, through the teachings of sūtra or tantra, has become your spiritual teacher and is thus worthy of respect. If you ignore this and treat a genuine wisdom teacher as an ordinary being, you have adopted an improper attitude, a wrong view [log lta], having failed to acknowledge the wisdom teacher for what he is.

Beginning students find it very difficult to know for themselves whether or not a teacher is genuine. Therefore, the Buddhist teachings provide ample guidelines enabling students to evaluate prospective teachers. In general, a student can always check to see if the master's teachings are helpful to his state of mind. When you put the teachings into practice, notice whether your afflictions decrease, or whether your positive attitude and virtuous mind [dge ba'i sems] become stronger. If the latter is the case, you must acknowledge the teacher's kindness. A genuine teacher is a conduit for the genuine dharma.

A general positive attitude is to think, "Whoever gives rise to any positive quality in my mind is my superior [gong ma]." Our parents are our superiors because they have given us life, clothing, and nourishment. Titles such as 'master' [slob dpon], 'guru' [bla ma], 'teacher' [ston pa], 'tutor' [dge rgan], 'elder' [rgan], 'superior' [gong ma], and 'spiritual friend' [dge ba'i bshes gnyen] all refer to those from whom we acquire knowledge and qualities. Once a teacher has imparted knowledge, or influenced us so that spiritual qualities arise, we should regard him as 'a superior of ours' [nga las mtho ba].

For example, if a teacher has caused a student to arouse bodhicitta, then the student should immediately acknowledge this, thinking, "Based on the teacher's kindness, bodhicitta has arisen in my mind." Further, the student should think, "Since it obviously benefits my mind greatly, I can place my trust in the dharma of the Buddha and in the teacher who has imparted the dharma to me." First, acknowledge the cause or catalyst of your newly-born qualities [yon tan gyi 'byung khung]; through this you

become able to place your trust [yid ches] in the teacher, the cause for these qualities to arise. This understanding, this recognition of the situation, is the very basis of faith and devotion. The dharma is not merely information gathered from others without a bond of deep respect and gratitude toward the source of that sacred knowledge.

When receiving the dharma, a student should distinguish between the teacher's personality [gang zag] on the one hand and the teacher's capacity to impart the genuine dharma [chos] on the other. These considerations must also be measured against the student's subjective responses [rang gi tshor ba] to the teacher and to the teachings. The 'perfect teacher' [bla ma phun sum tshogs pa], a teacher who is perfect as an individual [gang zag] and whose capacity to teach the genuine dharma is equally perfect, is very difficult to find. To meet a buddha-like teacher requires incredible merit and aspirations on the part of the student.

The teacher-student relationship is based on their mutual merit [bsod nams] and their mutual aspirations [smon lam]. Students of inferior merit and aspirations will meet only inferior teachers. Even were such students to meet a genuine teacher, they would not be able to place their trust in such a teacher. Their insufficient merit and force of aspiration means that they will at best form links with inferior teachers. If your teacher is not 'perfect', both as an individual and as a teacher, do not focus your mind on the person of the teacher, but instead focus only on the dharma teachings he imparts. You should ignore the flaws in the teacher's personality while continuing to acknowledge whatever qualities he has in presenting the genuine dharma. If, however, you discover that your teacher is presenting a corrupted version of the dharma, you should by all means abandon such a teacher and continue making heartfelt aspirations to find a genuine master.

Text sections 107-112:

Khenpo Kunpal now turns to the proper conduct for listening to the dharma. The Buddhist teachers often discuss 'the three defects of a listener'. Certain faults students may have when listening to the teachings are described through the metaphor of a pot. The student is compared to a pot; the dharma is compared to nectar poured into the pot; the teacher is the one who pours the nectar.

The first two of the *three defects* [skyon gsum] are those of the upside-down pot and the pot with a hole in it. These are relatively easy to avoid. If the student concentrates he can focus on what is being said, and he can remember the teachings. The third defect is exemplified by a pot containing poison. Ordinary beings find it very difficult to listen to the teachings without any 'poison', in other words without any afflictions. Our minds are generally engrossed in afflictions. One can, however, at least attempt to avoid the more obvious and gross afflictions such as listening to the teachings with the desire for greatness [che 'dod], the desire for fame [grags 'dod], or the desire for gain and recognition [rnyed bkur 'dod pa].

If you study the dharma because you want to become a famous scholar, this very motivation turns your dharma practice into something no longer dharmic [chos min].

Listening to the dharma accumulates merit, but if your motivation to study the dharma is rooted in desire, aversion, or ignorance, your practice is actually non-dharmic. Therefore, consciously generating the proper motivation every time you are about to receive teachings, every time you are about to study, and every time you are about to engage in practice is extremely important. When a qualified teacher expounds the dharma in a quiet place, free from any distractions, the afflictions present in the minds of the audience will naturally be reduced.

Text section 113:

Khenpo Kunpal now quotes the Buddha from the *Yum-Bar-Ma* [yum bar ma], the Prajñāpāramitā in twenty-five thousand lines: *"Listen closely, in the proper manner, and retain it in your mind! I will explain it!"* [legs par rab tu nyon la yid la zungs shig dang / ngas bshad par bya'o].

Listen closely [rab tu nyon la] means to listen with open ears and not like a pot turned upside down; the mind should be focused on nothing else [sems gzhan pa gtad mi dgos pa]. *Retain it in your mind* [yid la zungs shig] means to remember the teaching and not to resemble a pot with a hole in it. *In the proper manner* [legs par] means to listen without your mind being contaminated with afflictions so that you are not like a poison-laden pot.

The *Yum-Bar-Ma* or '*Medium-length Mother*' [yum bar ma; skr. mātṛkā-madhya] is a text of the Prajñāpāramitā literature. The Prajñāpāramitā literature is structured in the following way: first is the Extensive-length Mother [yum rgyas pa], then the Medium-length Mother [yum bar ma], and finally the Short-length Mother [yum bsdus pa].

The Extensive-length Mother is also called 'the Hundred Thousand' ['bum], referring to the Prajñāpāramitā in one hundred thousand lines [sher phyin stong phrag brgya pa], the extensive collection in twelve volumes. The Medium-length Mother refers to the Prajñāpāramitā in twenty-five thousand lines [sher phyin stong phrag nyi shu lnga pa], the mid-sized collection in four volumes. The Short-length Mother refers to the Prajñāpāramitā in eight thousand lines [brgyad stong pa], this being the short collection in one single volume.[1406] The term *Yum*, 'mother', is used to indicate that the

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1406 According to another classification it is said that the 'Extensive-length Mother' refers to the Prajñāpāramitā in one hundred thousand lines [yum rgyas pa ni sher phyin stong phrag brgya pa] (Peking 730); the 'extensive of the Medium-length Mother' refers to the Prajñāpāramitā in twenty-five thousand lines ['bring gi rgyas pa nyi khri lnga stong pa] (Peking 731); the 'medium of the Medium-length Mother' refers to the Prajñāpāramitā in eighteen thousand lines ['bring gi 'bring khri brgyad stong pa] (Peking 732); the 'short of the Medium-length Mother' refers to the Prajñāpāramitā in ten thousand lines ['bring gi bsdus pa shes rab khri ba] (Peking 733); the 'extensive of the Short-length Mother' refers to the Prajñāpāramitā in eight thousand lines [bsdus pa'i rgyas pa brgyad stong pa] (Peking 734); and the short of the Short-length Mother' refers to the 'Gathering of Precious Qualities' [bsdus pa'i bsdus pa yon tan rin po che sdud pa] (Peking 735).

transcendental wisdom [shes rab pha rol tu phyin pa] is the mother of all buddhas. The quintessence of Prajñāpāramitā is summed up in the following quote:

> The inexpressible and inconceivable transcendent intelligence
> Is unborn and unobstructed like the essence of space.
> Each individual has the capacity to experience his own awareness wisdom.
> To the mother of all buddhas, I pay homage.
>
> smra bsam brjod med shes rab pha rol phyin
> ma skyes mi 'gag nam mkha'i ngo bo nyid
> so so rang rig ye shes spyod yul ba
> dus gsum rgyal ba'i yum la phyag 'tshal lo

The great master Gampopa, the physican from Dakpo [sgam po pa dvags po lha rje], said, "*Unless you practice the dharma according to the dharma, the dharma itself becomes the cause for going to the lower realms*" [chos chos bzhin du ma spyad na chos kyis slar yang ngan song du 'gro ba'i rgyu byed]. Merely attempting to practice the dharma is not at all sufficient. Clearly understanding the proper way to practice the dharma [chos sgrub stangs] is most important. If you practice improperly, without correct understanding of the meaning and intent of the dharma, your dharma practice can actually become the cause for taking rebirth in the three lower realms.

In particular you must avoid mingling the study and practice of dharma with ignorance, anger, desire, arrogance and so forth. Studying and practicing the dharma with these mind poisons will only create negative karma. Your so-called dharma practice will become nothing but an accumulation of negative karma. When studying and practicing, generate a pure motivation [kun slong dvangs ma], the motivation of bodhicitta.

Text sections 114-115:

Khenpo Kunpal's explanation of the *six stains* [dri ma drug] further acquaints us with the potential defects of a listener, according to the explanation tradition of Paltrül Rinpoche. If your mind is not free from the *six stains*, then in this life you will experience many difficulties in your attempts to practice meditative *concentration* [bsam gtan], to gain *knowledge* [shes rab], and to attain *complete liberation* [rnam par grol ba] because of not understanding the perfect nature of the words and their meaning. The *perfect nature of the words and meaning* [tshig don phun sum tshogs pa'i rang bzhin] refers to 'the perfect nature of the words and meaning of the teachings of the buddhas and the treatises' written about them [bka' dang bstan bcos kyi tshig don phun sum tshogs pa'i rang bzhin]. The 'perfect words' [tshig phun sum tshogs pa] refers to the dharma, conveyed without any additions or omissions [lhag chad med pa]. The 'perfect meaning' [don phun sum tshogs pa] refers to the noble topic [brjod bya bzang ba], which is free from any error [ma nor ba] or faults.

If your mind is not free from the six stains, you will be unable to meditate on the perfect nature of Buddha's words and their meaning and will fail to gain knowledge-wisdom. Nor will you gain liberation from afflictions [nyon mongs las rnam par grol ba] through the acquisition of knowledge and the practice of meditation. Furthermore, these defects will keep you from having the opportunity to meet the dharma in your next lifetime but will instead keep you circling endlessly in saṃsāra. Therefore, listening to the dharma properly is of the utmost importance.

Text section 117:

A teacher of sūtra must know the distinction between the *provisional meaning* [drang don] and the *definitive meaning* [nges don]. Düjom Rinpoche provides a very clear definition of these two levels of teachings:[1407]

> The reality of all phenomena, the expanse of just what is [de bzhin nyid dbyings], the luminous realization of mind-nature—naturally pure and unchanging, beyond birth, arising, ceasing, and abiding—this space-like essence is the definitive meaning. All the teachings [bka'] and treatises [bstan bcos] which reveal it are subsumed [khongs su bsdu ba] within the definitive meaning.
>
> All apparitions of reality [chos can snang tshod] that appear dream-like and manifesting as diverse, successive forms such as those of arising and ceasing, coming and going, purity and impurity, aggregates [phung po], elements [khams], and sense fields [skye mched], which are all appraised and exaggeratedly indicated [sgro btags] by a succession of words, thoughts and expressions are called the provisional meaning. All the teachings and treatises which reveal them are subsumed within relative truth [kun rdzob]. For example, those which boast in words, expressions, and thoughts that mind-nature is space-like are relative truth, whereas the fundamental nature [gshis] of ultimate reality, the definitive meaning, is genuine [yang dag pa].
>
> If one asks what are the sūtras of definitive meaning and what are the sūtras of provisional meaning? Then those sūtras which are taught in order that one might enter the path [lam] are called the provisional meaning, and those sūtras which are taught in order that one might enter the result ['bras bu] are called the definitive meaning.
>
> Those sūtras which teach of self, sentient beings, life itself [srog], creatures [skyes bu], individuals [gang zag], personalities [shed las skyes], personal selves [shed bdag], doers [byed pa po], feelers of sensations [tshor ba po], explanations according to diverse terms [sgra rnam pa sna tshogs su bshad pa], and of that which has no owner [bdag po med pa] as an owner are

[1407] *Nyingmapa School of Tibetan Buddhism*, pages 217-218.

called the provisional meaning. The sūtras which teach of emptiness [stong pa nyid], of that which is signless [mtshan ma med pa], aspirationless [smon pa med pa], not manifestly conditioned [mngon par 'du mi 'byed pa], uncreated [ma skyes pa], unoriginated [ma byung ba], insubstantial [dngos pa med pa], without a self [bdag med pa], without sentient beings, without life itself, without individuals, without an owner [bdag po med pa] and without any properties even as far as the approach to liberation [rnam par thar pa'i sgo] are called the definitive meaning.

In short, the fundamental natural state [gshis kyi gnas lugs] and the sūtras which reveal it are said to be the definitive meaning and the sūtras of this (definitive meaning), while all those teachings which guide the intellect of sentient beings by many methods to the means of entering that fundamental nature [gshis], revealing the impure bewilderment ['khrul pa], its classifications and so on, are called the provisional meaning and the teachings of the provisional meaning.

Furthermore, a teacher should know the 'four kinds of intention' [dgongs pa rnam bzhi] with which the buddhas deliver their teachings: 1) the intention directed toward sameness [mnyam pa nyid la dgongs pa]; 2) the intention directed toward other meanings [don gzhan la dgongs pa]; 3) the intention directed toward other times [dus gzhan la dgongs pa]; and 4) the intention directed toward the thoughts of individuals [gang zag bsam pa la dgongs pa]. Düjom Rinpoche defines these as follows:[1408]

The intention [dgongs pa; skr. abhipraya] applies to those teachings which are included within slightly exaggerated [sgro btags] explanations and reveal indirect [kha drang par ma yin pa'i tshul] methods and purposes.

(1) Accordingly, the (Buddha's) intention is directed toward sameness, as is exemplified in the following words spoken with an intention directed toward the sameness of the dharmakāya: "At that time, I became the Tathāgata Vipaśyin."

(2) When this intention is directed toward other meanings it is exemplified by the following words which were spoken with an intention directed toward the three essenceless natures [ngo bo nyid med pa gsum]: "All phenomena are without essence."

Now, the imaginary [kun brtags] is without essence in respect of attributes [mtshan nyid ngo bo nyid med] because in truth it definitely does not exist. The dependent [gzhan dbang] is without essence in respect of creation, because creation from the four extremes does not exist [skye ba ngo bo nyid de mu bzhi las skye ba ma grub pa]: Things are not created from themselves because both that which was created and creation itself consist of instantaneous time moments, which renders them mutually exclusive

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1408 *Nyingmapa School of Tibetan Buddhism*, pages 218-220.

> substances [rdzas 'gal ba]. Nor are things created from something else, because the specific characteristics [rang mtshan] of that something else do not, on analysis, exist. Then, things are not created from both (themselves and other causes), because they are mutually exclusive substances; and, (finally) without a cause, creation is impossible. The creation of whatever is apparitional and so forth instantly appears inasmuch as it is dependently originated [rten 'brel] in the manner of a mere dream or illusion.
>
> The absolute [yongs grub] is without essence in respect of ultimate reality [don dam pa'i ngo bo nyid med] because therein (the view that) ultimate reality exists, or that the self is impure, and other such conceptual elaborations are essenceless [spros pa'i ngo bo nyid med].
>
> (3) The (Buddha's) intention is then directed toward other times, as exemplified in the words: "By merely grasping (remembering) the name of the Tathāgata Vimalacandraprabha [dri med zla 'od], you will attain buddhahood." Although buddhahood is not attained by that alone, (the intention is that) someone who has accumulated many accumulations in the past will at some time become a buddha.
>
> (4) The intention directed toward the thoughts of individuals is exemplified by (the buddhas') downgrading of moral discipline [tshul khrims] and praise of liberality [sbyin pa] in the presence of certain individuals who are conceited with respect to their own moral discipline [tshul khrims mchog 'dzin gyi lta bar zhen pa rnams].

Furthermore, a teacher of sūtra must know the *four kinds of covert intentions* [ldem dgongs rnam pa bzhi] with which the buddhas deliver the teachings. The 'four kinds of covert intentions' are: (1) the covert intentions with respect to entering into the teachings [gzhugs pa la ldem por dgongs pa]; (2) the covert intentions with respect to attributes [mtshan nyid la ldem por dgongs pa]; (3) the covert intentions with respect to antidotes [gnyen po la ldem por dgongs pa]; and (4) the covert intentions with respect to interpretation [bsgyur ba la ldem por dgongs pa]. Düjom Rinpoche defines the term as follows:[1409]

> Secondly, concerning the covert intention: It is explained that in order to induce another party [pha rol], who delights in any view whatsoever, to enter into the correct path or meaning, (the buddhas) adopt a style conforming to the needs of that person by relying somewhat on that person's vocabulary [ming] and mannerism [cha ldan], but their meaning does not conform.

Thus, because of *covert intention* [ldem dgongs], when teaching, the buddhas may conform or adjust their style [tshul dang mthun pa] and presentation. However, they

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1409 *Nyingmapa School of Tibetan Buddhism*, page 220.

will never conform in meaning [don la mi mthun pa], indicating that they will in no way compromise the content of the dharma in an attempt to adapt to their audience and circumstances. Düjom Rinpoche continues:[1410]

> (1) The covert intention with respect to entering is illustrated as follows. In order that certain members of those inclined to the śrāvaka [nyon thos kyi rigs can], who have not entered the greater vehicle [theg chen] out of fear of emptiness, may so 'enter' [gzhug pa], (the buddhas) would say that form exists, and thereby the listeners would enter assuming that (form) really exists, while the teachers (the buddhas) would 'intend' [dgongs pa] that all appearance is like a dream.

The śrāvakas are able to realize the egolessness of personal identity [gang zag gi bdag med] but not the egolessness of phenomena [chos kyi bdag med]. They feel uncomfortable with the teachings on profound emptiness. Therefore, the buddhas teach those śrāvakas that form exists, and in that way they enable the śrāvakas to begin to follow the Mahāyāna teachings on emptiness. This method does not, however, alter the intention of the buddhas which is to have the śrāvakas eventually realize that all appearance is no more real than a dream. In that way the buddhas are skilled in the means [thabs la mkhas pa] of leading the students step by step to a deeper understanding of profound emptiness. Düjom Rinpoche further elaborates:[1411]

> (2) The covert intention with respect to attributes is exemplified as follows. In order that the natural state devoid of any essence [ngo bo nyid med pa'i gnas lugs] can be known, (the buddhas) reveal that all phenomena are devoid of an essence. The three essenceless natures [ngo bo nyid med gusm] are the imaginary [kun brtags], the dependent [gzhan dbang], and the absolute [yongs grub].
>
> (3) The covert intention with respect to antidotes is exemplified by the following words which were spoken with an intention directed toward those beings who would think that, "Śākyamuni is inferior to other teachers (buddhas) because he is smaller in body, shorter in lifespan and so on." (Therefore, Buddha Śākyamuni said), "At that time I became the Tathāgata Vairocana."
>
> In this way, the listeners understand (all) the (buddhas) to be the same in their rūpakāya, while the teacher (Śākyamuni) intends (to teach) that their accumulations are equally perfected, that their attainments of the dharmakāya are equal, and that their deeds on behalf of living beings are equal. As it is said in the Abhidharma-koṣa-kārikā:
>
> All the buddhas are identical in their accumulations,

1410 *Nyingmapa School of Tibetan Buddhism*, page 220.

1411 *Nyingmapa School of Tibetan Buddhism*, pages 220-221.

Their dharmakāya and their conduct
On behalf of sentient beings,
But not so in their lifespan,
Caste and physical size.

sangs rgyas thams cad tshogs dang ni
chos sku 'gro ba'i don spyod pa
mnyam pa nyid de sku tshe dang
rigs dang sku bong tshad kyis min

End of quote.

When students had doubts about Buddha Śākyamuni, thinking that he must be inferior to buddhas that had appeared in other eras due to their lifespan and physical size being greater, Buddha Śākyamuni said, "At that time I became the Tathāgata Vairocana." This refers to the saṃbhogakāya buddha Vairocana called 'Great Glacial Ocean Vairocana' [rnam snang gangs chen mtsho].

This statement by the Buddha tells us that Buddha Śākyamuni is manifest on the saṃbhogakāya level as Buddha Vairocana, named 'Great Glacial Ocean'. This saṃbhogakāya buddha is moreover indivisible from all the buddhas of the ten directions. Within each pore of his body infinite world systems appear, and within each atom of these world systems is an infinity of other worlds with infinite forms of Vairocana. Each form of Vairocana contains infinite buddhas and buddha fields. Vairocana encompasses the entirety of all world systems, and the entirety of all world systems constitutes Vairocana.

Our world system, called 'world system of endurance' [mi mjed 'jig rten gyi khams, skr. sahalokadhātu], is an infinitely tiny segment within these oceanic world systems. On Vairocana's palm alone are twenty-five lotuses, each containing billions of 'third order of thousand world systems'.[1412] On the thirteenth lotus tier, at exactly the middle level

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1412 The term 'third order of thousand (world systems)' [stong gsum], often translated as 'three thousand-fold world systems', means 1.000 to the power of three, which equals one billion single world systems. One single world system ['jig rten gyi khams] includes Mount Sumeru, sun and moon, the four continents, the worlds of the gods of desire and the world of Brahmā.

The sum of 'a thousand single world systems' is called 'the first order of a thousand world systems' [stong dang po / stong dang po'i jig rten gyi khams / stong spyi phud kyi 'jig rten gyi khams] or 'the lesser order of a thousand world systems' [stong chung ngu'i 'jig rten gyi khams], which means 1.000 to the power of one.

One thousand 'lesser order of a thousand world systems' constitute 'the middle order of a thousand world systems' [stong bar ma'i 'jig rten gyi khams] or 'the second order of a thousand world systems' [stong gnyis pa; skr. dvi-sāhasra / stong gnyis pa'i jig rten gyi khams], which means a thousand to the power of two or one million separate world systems.

One thousand 'middle order of a thousand world systems' make 'the large order of a thousand world systems' [stong chen po'i 'jig rten gyi khams] or 'the third order of a thousand world systems' [stong gsum pa; tri-sāhasra], also called 'the third order, the larger order of one

of the twenty-five lotuses, our 'third order of thousand world systems' is found; however, our 'third order of thousand world systems' is merely one among billions. One 'third order of thousand world systems' is the field of influence of one nirmāṇakāya—in our case, of Buddha Śākyamuni.

When Buddha Śākyamuni stated that he had become 'Great Glacial Ocean Vairocana', he eradicated all doubts concerning his possible inferiority due to the difference in his lifespan and physical size when compared with that of other buddhas. All buddhas are equal with regard to the two accumulations of merit and wisdom. Their realization of the dharmakāya, moreover, is also equal. Furthermore, they equally benefit sentient beings. Nevertheless, they differ in lifespan [sku tshe], caste [rigs], and physical size [sku bong]. Düjom Rinpoche next states:[1413]

> (4) The covert intention with respect to interpretation refers to teachings given in a form which is extremely difficult to understand in order to pacify the faults of those who think, "This doctrine is inferior to others because it is easy to understand." For example, it is said in the Udāna-varga:[1414]
>
> He should kill his father and mother,
> And if he destroys the king and the two purities,
> The country and its surroundings,
> This man will become pure in nature."
>
> pha dang ma ni gsad bya zhing
> rgyal po gtsang sbra can gnyis dang
> yul 'khor skor bcas bcom pa na
> mi de dag pa nyid du 'gyur
>
> Now, the father and mother are craving [sred pa] and grasping [len pa] because they compound saṃsāra. The king is the all-ground [kun gzhi] because this becomes the support or ground of various habitual patterns. The two purities [gtsang sbra gnyis] are the Brāhmaṇa view of mundane aggregates (eternalistic view) [bram ze 'jig tshogs la blta ba] and the view of those who are conceited with respect to their virtuous moral discipline and yogic discipline [dge sbyong tshul khrims dang brtul zhugs mchog 'dzin gyis blta ba]. The country and its surroundings are the eight aggregates of

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thousand world systems' [stong gsum gyi stong chen po'i 'jig rten gyi khams; skr. tri-sāhasra-mahāsāhasro loka-dhātuḥ], which means a thousand to the power of three or one billion separate word systems—a trichiliocosm. For further details see *Buddhist Cosmology*, *Illuminator, Myriad Worlds*; and *Prince Jiṇ-Gim's Textbook.*

1413 *Nyingmapa School of Tibetan Buddhism*, page 221.

1414 *Udāna-varga (1)* [ched du brjod pa'i tshoms], page 106.3.8 and *Udāna-varga (2)* [ched du brjod pa'i tshoms], page 76.4.4

consciousness [rnam shes tshgos brgyad][1415] along with the subject-object grasping of the inner sense fields [nang gi skye mched]. If all these are destroyed and purified, one becomes a buddha.

Without a teacher to explain all these different levels of interpretation, one will never truly understand the dharma. Just by reading the Buddhist texts, one will not gain genuine understanding. One needs to have the correct perspective for interpreting the scriptures. Since the texts possess many words, meanings, intentions, and purposes, it is crucial to know in what manner they are to be expounded.

Text section 119:

The first of the *four concepts* ['du shes bzhi] teaches that you should consider yourself as a person afflicted with sickness of afflictions. Among the four noble truths, the truth of cessation and the truth of the path are the dharma. The truth of suffering and the truth of origination are what must be overcome and rejected [spang bya]. Concerning the Four Noble Truths it is said:

You must understand the truth of suffering,
Overcome the truth of origination,
Aim for the truth of cessation,
And apply the path to your mind.

sdug bsngal shes par bya
kun 'byung spong bar bya
'gog pa sngon du bzhag dgos
lam rgyud la brten dgos

Many people do not know how to identify suffering. At first, one must understand that one is afflicted by the illnesses represented by the truth of suffering [sdug bsngal bden pa].

There are three fundamental types of suffering [rtsa ba'i sdug bsngal gsum]: suffering of change ['gyur ba'i sdug bsngal], suffering upon suffering [sdug bsngal gyi sdug bsngal], and omnipresent suffering in the making [khyab pa 'du byed kyi sdug bsngal].

1415 The eight aggregates of consciousness [rnam shes tshogs brgyad; skt. aṣṭa-vijñānakāya] are 1) the consciousness of the eye [mig gi rnam par shes pa; skr. cakṣurvijñāna]; 2) the consciousness of the ear [rna ba'i rnam par shes pa; skr. śrotravijñāna]; 3) the consciousness of the nose [sna'i rnam par shes pa; skr. ghrāṇavijñāna]; 4) the consciousness of the tongue [lce'i rnam par shes pa; skr. jihvāvijñāna]; 5) the consciousness of the body [lus kyi rnam par shes pa; skr. kāyavijñāna]; 6) the consciousness of the intellect [yid kyi rnam par shes pa; skr. manovijñāna]; 7) the consciouness of the intellect endowed with afflictions [nyon mongs pa can gyi yid kyi rnam shes; skr. kliṣṭamanovijñāna]; 8) the all-ground consciousness [kun gzhi'i rnam shes; skr. ālayavijñāna].

What is referred to as the 'suffering of change' is the suffering we experience when a state of happiness suddenly changes into suffering. One moment we are happy and the next moment we are overcome by sickness, we lose our house and property, or are otherwise plunged into suffering.

We experience 'suffering upon suffering' when, before one suffering has passed, we are subjected to another. We get leprosy, and then we break out in boils. Our father dies and then our mother dies soon afterwards. We are pursued by enemies and, on top of that, a loved one dies. In this way, one misery is heaped upon another.

The 'omnipresent suffering in the making' [khyab pa 'du byed kyi sdug bsngal] refers to the suffering omnipresent throughout all the three realms of saṃsāra. Although we might not experience this suffering right now, nonetheless, we are constantly preoccupied with preparing, fabricating, and attracting the causes for inevitable future suffering. Our very food and clothing, our homes, celebrations, life-style and the adornments, all of which give us pleasure, are actually all the result of harmful actions. Whatever we do for ourselves is at the expense of other beings. As everything we do is nothing more than a concoction of negative actions, it can lead only to suffering.

We also undergo three further kinds of suffering: at the moment of death we have the suffering of being cut off from life ['chi kha gnad gcod kyi sdug bsngal]. Next, we will experience the suffering of the intermediate state [shi nas bar do'i sdug bsngal]. Later, we will be forced to take rebirth and experience the suffering of the three lower realms [phyi ma ngan song gi sdug bsngal].

Furthermore, there is the suffering of birth [skye ba], old age [rga ba], sickness [na ba], and death ['chi ba]. There is the suffering of losing loved ones [byams pa dang bral gyi dogs pa'i sdug pa], the suffering of meeting enemies [dgra sdang ba dang 'phrad kyis dogs pa'i sdug bsngal], the suffering of not getting what one wants ['dod pa thog tu mi khel ba'i sdug bsngal], and the suffering of encountering what one does not wish to [mi 'dod pa thog tu 'babs pa'i sdug bsngal].

In addition to these there is also the particular suffering experienced by the beings of the six realms [rigs drug so so'i sdug bsngal]: beings in hell are tormented by the suffering of heat and cold [tsha grang gi sdug bsgnal]; pretas suffer from hunger and thirst [bkres skom gyi sdug bsngal]; animals are afflicted with stupidity and ignorance; human beings must endure birth, aging, disease, and death [skye rga na 'chi'i sdug bsngal]; demi-gods struggle with quarreling and fighting ['thab rtsod gyi sdug bsngal]; and even the gods experience the suffering of death and transition ['chi 'pho ba'i sdug bsngal].

The causes of all these types of suffering [sdug bsngal gyi rgyu] are karma and afflictions [las dang nyon mongs pa]. The cause of karma is afflictions. The root of afflictions is ego-clinging [bdag 'dzin]. To identify the causes of suffering is the intent of the truth of origination [kun 'byung gi bden pa]. The method [thabs] of overcoming the origination of suffering is known as the truth of the path, while the result of having overcome the origination of suffering brings one to the truth of cessation.

If one takes refuge in the dharma, one is taking refuge in the truth of cessation and the truth of the path, and not in the truth of suffering and the truth of origination. The truths of suffering and its origination are part of the dharma, but they are what must be overcome [spang bya] or transcended and, therefore, are not themselves objects of refuge. Suffering and the origination of suffering by themselves are not the dharma. They become the dharma only when overcome.

At first, it is imperative to consider your mind to be ill since it bears the causes of suffering. Once your mind is free from ego-clinging and afflictions, no cause for suffering remains in your mind, and you no longer need to regard yourself as a sick person.

The second of the 'four concepts' means that one must consider the dharma as medicine. A simple definition of the dharma can be that the dharma is a 'positive mindset', a 'noble motivation' [chos zer ba 'di bsam pa bzang po]. Dharma is positive motivation and positive thinking. A negative mindset, negative motivation, and negative thinking are not the way of the dharma. Many so-called Buddhist practitioners focus too much on external activities like hanging prayer flags, reciting the scriptures, and performing rituals, without understanding that these activities all depend on positive motivation, on positive thinking. Consider the dharma as the cure for the causes of suffering. The method that frees the practitioner from suffering and the causes of suffering is included in the truth of the path [lam gyi bden pa]. Therefore it is said, "Apply the truth of the path to your mind [lam bden rgyud la brten par bya'o]."

The third among the 'four concepts' speaks of developing the attitude that intensive practice is the best cure for the illness of your being. Just knowing the dharma is not sufficient. You need to apply the teachings to your being day and night. Only if you dedicate yourself entirely to the path of enlightenment will there be a chance for you to actually make some progress in this very lifetime. Do not waste this precious opportunity of having found the genuine dharma, a genuine teacher, and the ideal conditions to practice the dharma.

Finally, the fourth concept is that you regard your spiritual master as a learned physician. The spiritual friend [dge ba'i bshes gnyen] should be considered to be similar to the Buddha [sangs rgyas lta bu'i 'du shes]. It is most important to place one's trust in one's spiritual guide. If you do not trust in the physician, you will not trust in his medicine, and there will be no chance to cure your illnesses.

Text sections 120-121:

Khenpo Kunpal here discusses a particular meditation used as preparation for listening to the teachings. At first, before the teaching begins, the listener must develop bodhicitta. Whatever teaching you receive, whatever practice you do, if you lack bodhicitta you are not engaged in the Mahāyāna path. Having given rise to bodhicitta, the listener now meditates upon himself as the female bodhisattva *Tārā*, imagining a white lotus appearing at the level of his right ear. Meditate that your teacher is the Bodhisattva *Mañjuśrī*, the manifestation of the wisdom aspect of all the buddhas,

sitting in the sky before you on a throne which is supported by eight lions and upon which are lotus, sun, and moon discs. Mañjuśrī holds the sword of wisdom [ye shes ral gri] in his right hand, and in his left hand he holds the Prajñāpāramitā scripture [sher phyin glegs bam].

On the basis of this meditation, continue the visualization by imagining that as you hear the master’s teachings, light rays emanate from the master’s mouth and dissolve into the lotus by your ear. Furthermore, visualize all beings as female deities. While receiving teachings, always meditate upon your teacher as a male deity and on all the students, including yourself, as female deities. At the end [thon khar] of the teaching, rest a few moments in the recognition of non-conceptual emptiness. This is the yoga for the beginning, the main part, and the end of a teaching session. This teaching instruction guides students in the practice of pure perception, thus transforming them into proper vessels for receiving the teachings. This practice, which is known as ’the six sections of Tārā’ [sgrol ma yan lag drug], is the method of visualizing oneself as Tārā while receiving teachings.

The reason for visualizing the teacher as Mañjuśrī and yourself and all fellow students as female deities is to purify the ordinary subject-object dichotomy [yul dang yul can]. The purified object is dharmadhātu [chos kyi dbyings], the expanse of absolute truth, and the purified subject is wisdom [ye shes]. In this practice, wisdom is symbolized through a male deity, here Mañjuśrī, while the expanse [dbyings], or dharmadhātu, is symbolized through a female deity, here Tārā. This is a training in pure perception [dag snang]; the teacher is considered to be the personification of wisdom [ye shes kyi rang gzugs], while the students regard themselves as female deities, as the personification of discriminating knowledge [shes rab gyi rang gzugs]. On the ultimate level, the terms wisdom [ye shes] and discriminating knowledge [shes rab] are synonymous; however, on the relative level, it is discriminating knowledge that recognizes non-conceptual wisdom.

Text sections 122-123:

When listening to the dharma, students should practice the six transcendental perfections. As the practice of generosity, set up a throne for the master and offer him flowers. In this case, the flower offering represents the entire maṇḍala offering. At best, when requesting teachings, a student should offer a maṇḍala made out of precious metals such as gold, silver and so forth. The student should at least perform the maṇḍala mudra and chant the ‘seven point maṇḍala offering’. This famous offering prayer was composed by king Trisong Detsen, when he offered his entire kingdom to Guru Rinpoche:

> The earth is sprinkled with scented water and strewn with flowers,
> Adorned with Mount Meru, the four continents, the sun, and the moon.
> Imagining this as a buddha realm, I offer it
> So that all beings may enjoy the pure realms.
> Idam ratna maṇḍala kaṃ niryātayāṃī

sa gzhi spos chus byugs shing me tog bkram
ri rab gling bzhi nyi zlas brgyan pa 'di
sangs rgyas zhing du dmigs te phul ba yis
'gro kun rnam dag zhing la spyod par shog
Idam ratna maṇḍala kaṃ niryātayāṃī

As a practice of discipline, prior to the teachings, the students should thoroughly clean the venue where the teachings are to take place. The students should beautify the entire setting and perfume the air with incense. The students themselves should be clean and properly dressed, and their conduct during the teachings should be well composed and disciplined.

As a practice of patience during the teachings, the students should endure insect bites and always abstain from killing any insects. They should sit calmly and should not fight or quarrel with their fellow students.

The practice of diligence means the students should again and again request the master to teach the dharma. Sometimes students must make many requests before the master agrees to give the teachings. Also, privately, the students should make prayers and supplications to the master to teach the dharma. Once the teacher has begun to teach, students should listen, study, and practice what they have learned diligently. It is said that while imbibing the nectar of the teachings, one should always look at the face of the teacher.

As the practice of meditation, the students listen to the teachings while avoiding all distractions of body, speech, or mind. The students' minds should stay focused on whatever the teacher says. There should be no gossip nor even any talk among the students during the teachings, and those listening should keep their bodies still and poised. Students should not even recite mantras or use their mālas (rosaries) while receiving teachings. They should be utterly, single-mindedly concentrated on the teachings.

The practice of knowledge [shes rab] means that students should listen, contemplate, and meditate on the teachings they receive from their master. They should ask questions to clarify what is not understood, thus eliminating any doubts they may have about what is being said. This is how students should practice the six transcendental perfections while receiving teachings.

Text section 124:

Just as students listening to the dharma must align their motivation and behavior with the conduct of the bodhisattvas, the master as well should practice the six transcendental perfections while teaching the dharma. If all six transcendental perfections are not completely present, the teacher's bodhisattva activity is not fully manifest.

The first transcendental perfection, that of generosity, is fulfilled through the act of giving teachings. Among all forms of generosity, the gift of dharma is supreme. The perfection of discipline is fulfilled by the teacher remaining free from afflictions. Among all afflictions, at the very least, the teacher must remain free from aggression [zhe sdang], ill will or jealousy [phrag dog], and pride [nga rgyal]. This instructs us that a teacher is to observe the discipline of abstaining from harming others [gzhan gnod spong ba'i tshul khrims].

Third, a teacher must also practice patience, bearing any kind of fatigue [skyo ngal], whether mental fatigue [sems skyo ba] or physical hardship [lus ngal ba]; and he must teach the dharma tirelessly. He should bear any harm [gnod 'tshe] his students might inflict upon him due to incorrect understanding and practice ['khor gyi log sgrub bzod pa]. When the mind of a teacher remains composed through his practice of patience, his dharma discourse will not be disturbed. A true master must be patient with his students and should never get angry with them.

Since the master expounds the dharma with joy when teaching, he is practicing the fourth transcendental perfection of diligence. Fifth, by remaining undistracted while teaching the dharma, he is practicing the transcendental perfection of meditation or concentration. Since a qualified master is able to discern both the words and their meanings, the transcendental perfection of knowledge is also functioning within him. In this way, a proper master imparting the teachings is endowed with all six transcendental perfections.

In general, a sūtra teacher must be learned regarding the dharma [chos kyi don la mkhas pa] and must be imbued with bodhicitta [byang chub kyi sems dang ldan pa]. He must know the scriptures of the Mahāyāna tripiṭaka [theg pa chen po sde snod gsum] and must be fully endowed with all the oral instructions [gdamgs ngag] of his gurus.

Text section 125:

To further elucidate the guidelines for one who teaches the dharma, Khenpo Kunpal quotes Śāntideva from stanza 88 of the fifth chapter of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, which specifically states that one should not teach the dharma to those who do not respect the Buddha's teachings:[1416]

> Do not explain the dharma to those who are disrespectful,
> Nor to those who, while not being sick, wrap their heads,
> Nor to those who carry parasols, staffs, or weapons,
> Nor to those who cover their heads.

Echoing Śāntideva's advice, a Tibetan proverb comments:

> Never teach the dharma to people without faith.

[1416] For a commentary on stanza 88 see *kun dpal 'grel pa (si khron mi rigs edition)*, pages 403-404.

> Whoever teaches the dharma to people without faith
> Will not be liberated (from the lower realms) for a thousand aeons.
>
> ma dad pa la chos ma bshad
> ma dad pa la chos bshad na
> bskal po stong nas ya mtha' med

By teaching dharma to people who lack faith, the greatness of the dharma [chos kyi che ba] will vanish. The dharma is the path to the highest of all attainments, the path to enlightenment, and should not be treated like ordinary information, or like an interesting story [lo rgyus] that can be spoken of in a casual setting.

Those who, through their motivation and conduct, disrespect the dharma and the teacher in any way should not receive any instructions. If dharma is taught to disrespectful persons, the greatness of the dharma will deteriorate, and the listeners will receive no benefit from hearing the teachings. The teachings will lose their transformative power. The purpose of the teachings, is, after all, to transform the being of the listener. Hence, a qualified teacher is one worthy of respect, an individual who has transformed and is transforming his own being through the teachings.

Moreover, a qualified teacher will never knowingly teach the dharma to people who lack respect for the teachings, because such people could accumulate negative karma for themselves if they develop wrong views [log lta] about the dharma or reject the dharma [chos spong ba'i las]. A qualified teacher will never put anyone in the situation of developing wrong views, since the negative karma that comes from this could cause the listeners to take rebirth in the three lower realms. For reasons such as these a teacher should not teach the dharma to those without respect or faith. This is an essential rule for one who teaches the dharma.

The rule for students is to respect each dharma teacher, even a teacher who has taught them only a single stanza of the dharma. In dharma study there is no place for the sort of disrespect one often finds in present day school rooms.

When listening to the dharma one should bare one's head as a sign of respect. Thus, the scriptures state that the dharma should not be taught to people who are wearing hats, carrying parasols, staffs, or weapons. Only if the heat of the sun is unbearable or if it is raining can the audience cover their heads with shawls [gzan] or protect them with parasols or umbrellas. People who are sick or old are allowed to use canes or walking sticks, but only those who are ill should cover their heads with hats or shawls. Weapons are never permitted in a teaching situation.

Likewise, students sitting on seats higher than the teacher should not be taught the dharma. If the teacher is standing, the students are not allowed to remain seated. If the teacher is standing and the student remain sitting, the teacher should not expound the dharma. If students walk together with their teacher and he expounds the dharma to them while walking, they should walk on the teacher's left side, with their right side facing the teacher. Also, a translator should sit on the teacher's left. Moreover, pointing

one’s feet toward the dharma teacher or turning one’s back to the teacher while he is teaching is utterly improper.

In a traditional teaching setting, students first offer three prostrations to the teacher. Then the students and teacher recite together the short praise to the Bodhisattva Mañjughoṣa called ‘Gangi Lodro’ [gang gi blo gros] in order to open the wisdom eye:

> “I bow to Mañjughoṣa whose intellect, free from the clouds of the two obscurations, is brillantly illuminating and totally pure like the sun,
> Perceiving all things just as they are, you hold a volume of scripture to your heart.
> Your speech endowed with sixty melodious aspects, you care, as for an only child,
> For those hosts of beings tormented by suffering and engulfed in the darkness of ignorance in the prison of existence.
> Thundering mightily like a dragon, you shatter the sleep of afflictions and sunder the chains of karma.
> Dispelling the darkness of ignorance, you wield the sword that severs the seedlings of suffering.
> Primordially pure, you body is the foremost among the children of the victorious ones, those who have reached the pinnacle of the ten levels and perfected all qualities.
> Adorned wih one hundred and twelve ornaments, you dispel the darkness of my mind.
> Om A Ra Pa Tsa Na Dhi”
>
> gang gi blo gros sgrib gnyis sprin bral nyi ltar rnam dag rab gsal bas //
> ji snyed don kun ji bzhin gzigs phyir nyid kyi thugs kar glegs bam ’dzin //
> gang dag srid pa’i btson rar ma rig mun ’thums sdug bsngal gyis gzir ba’i //
> ’gro tshogs kun la bu gicg ltar brtse yan lag drug cu’i dbyangs ldan gsung //
> ’brug ltar cher sgrogs nyon mongs gnyid slong las kyi lcags sgrog ’grol mdzad cing //
> ma rig mun sel sdug bsngal myu gu ji snyed gcod mdzad ral gri bsnams //
> gdod nas dag cing sa bcu’i mthar son yon tan lus rdzogs rgyal sras thu bo’i sku //
> bcu phrag bcu dang bcu gnyis rgyan spras bdag blo’i mun sel ’jam pa’i dbyangs la’dud //
> Oṃ a ra pa ca na dhīḥ

The students next present an offering [mchod pa phul], while reciting the 'seven point maṇḍala offering':

> The earth is sprinkled with scented water and strewn with flowers,
> Adorned with Mount Meru, the four continents, the sun, and the moon.
> Imagining this as a buddha realm, I offer it
> So that all beings may enjoy the pure realms.
> Idam ratna maṇḍala kaṃ niryātayāṃī
>
> sa gzhi spos chus byugs shing me tog bkram
> ri rab gling bzhi nyi zlas brgyan pa 'di
> sangs rgyas zhing du dmigs te phul ba yis
> 'gro kun rnam dag zhing la spyod par shog
> Idam ratna maṇḍala kaṃ niryātayāṃī

Finally, with joined palms, the students request the teacher to turn the wheel of dharma [chos 'khor bskor ba bskul]:

> According to sentient beings' thoughts
> And specific mental capacities,
> Please turn the wheel of dharma
> Of the greater, lesser or common vehicle.
>
> sems can rnams kyis bsams pa dang //
> blo yi bye brag ji lta ba //
> che chung thun mong theg pa yi //
> chos kyi 'khor lo skor du gsol //

Now the teacher will begin to expound the dharma and the students should listen attentively to the teachings. At the end of the teaching session, the teacher and the students dedicate the merit and make the following aspiration [bsngo smon]:

> Through this merit may I attain omniscience and
> Defeating the foe of misdeeds,
> May I free all beings from the ocean of saṃsāra
> With its stormy waves of birth, old age, sickness and death.
>
> bsod nams 'di yis thams cad gzigs pa nyid //
> thob nas nyes pa'i dgra rnams pham byas nas //
> skye rga na 'chi rba rlabs 'khrugs pa yi //
> srid pa'i mtsho las 'gro ba sgrol bar shog /

May the precious and supreme bodhicitta
Arise in those in whom it has not yet arisen;
And where it has arisen may it not decrease
But ever increase more and more.

byang chub sems mchog rin po che
ma skyes pa rnams skye gyur cig
skyes pa nyams pa med pa yang
gong nas gong du 'phel bar shog

At the end of the teachings the students may again present an offering to the teacher as a thanksgiving [btang rag gi tshul du].

Text section 127:

Khenpo Kunpal also gives the five great key points from the Vyākhyā-yukti. The great Indian paṇḍitas such as Vasubhandu and others based their teaching style ['chad stangs] on these five points, as did the teachers at Śrī Siṃha Shedra, such as Paltrül Rinpoche, Ön Urgyen Tendzin Norbu, and Khenpo Zhenga. My personal teacher Khenpo Pentse [mkhan po pad tshe][1417] also always explained all sūtras [mdo] and treatises [bstan bcos] according to these five great points:

1. The purpose [dgos don / dgos pa'i don]
2. The condensed meaning [bsdus don / bsdus pa'i don]
3. The meaning of the words [tshig don / tshig gi don]
4. The outline [mtshams sbyor gyi don]
5. The responses to objections [rgal lan gyi don].

1. The first point is the teaching's *purpose* [dgos don / dgos pa'i don]. The teacher should first explain the general purpose [spyi'i dgos pa] and the benefits of listening to the dharma, and then he should explain the specific purpose [khyad par gyi dgos pa], the subject matter to be taught. The general and particular purpose has also been explained earlier under the fifth of the five preliminary assessments: 'How a learned paṇḍita teacher expounds the dharma'. See text-section 102 in this commentary:

> (The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra) was composed to benefit all sentient beings in general, and in particular, so that the five hundred paṇḍitas of glorious Nālandā could understand how to practice the way of the bodhisattvas in a complete and unmistaken fashion.

[1417] Short for Khenpo Pema Tsewang [mkhan po pad ma tshe dbang].

In this context, the teacher may outline what are known as 'the four related aspects, such as the purpose and so on' [dgos sogs chos bzhi]: (a) the topic [brjod bya], (b) the purpose [dgos pa], (c) the ultimate purpose [nying dgos], and (d) the relation between these ['brel ba]. These points must be explained at the beginning of a teaching on a treatise.

The first of these, the topic that is taught in the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, is the precious bodhicitta, the entrance into the precepts of the bodhisattvas. The second related aspect, the purpose for studying the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, is that studying the teachings of the Buddha is meaningful. Third, the ultimate purpose of studying the teachings is to attain the level of perfect enlightenment. Finally, the relation between these points is such that one cannot understand the latter points without having first studied the former. Without practicing bodhicitta and the precepts of the bodhisattvas, one will not understand the teachings of the Buddha and will never reach perfect enlightenment.[1418]

2. The second of the five points through which the scholars explain the scriptures and treatises is the *condensed meaning* or summary [bsdus don / bsdus pa'i don] of the whole treatise. Here, the teacher should give a general overview [ngag don bsdus pa'i don] as well as an overview of each individual topic [so so'i bsdus don]. The brief meaning of the treatise from beginning to end has already been stated under the fourth of the five preliminary assessments through which the Indian paṇḍitas evaluate Buddhist treatises in text section 101, called 'How a learned paṇḍita teacher expounds the dharma':

> (The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra) explains in great detail how to train in the motivation of supreme bodhicitta and in the application of the six transcendental perfections.

The teacher should summarize the text in an accessible and easily remembered way. Next, he should give an overview of each topic and present the text as a whole from beginning to end. The teacher should delineate the major sections of the text and their subdivisions. Here, the teacher should use Paltrül Rinpoche's specific style of structuring the entire text in an easy manner, which follows the framework provided by the following four famous lines:

> May the precious and supreme bodhicitta
> Arise in those in whom it has not yet arisen;
> And where it has arisen may it not decrease
> But ever increase more and more."
>
> byang chub sems mchog rin po che

[1418] For detailed analyisis of the four interrelated aspects such as the purpose and so forth [dgos sogs chos bzhi / dgos 'brel yan lag bzhi], see Paltrül Rinpoche's commentary on Asaṅga's *Abhisamayālaṃkāra*, called *mngon rtogs rgyan gyi spyi don*, page 22.

ma skyes pa rnams skye gyur cig
skyes pa nyams pa med pa yang
gong nas gong du 'phel bar shog

This aspiration summarizes [phyogs bsdoms kyi tshig / bsdus tshig] the entire Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra has ten chapters in 913 stanzas. The ten chapters are structured by categorizing them into four principal sections [rtsa'i sa bcad]:

The first principal section, which includes the first three chapters, is titled 'Three chapters that give rise to the precious bodhicitta in those in whom it has not yet arisen' [byang chub kyi sems rin po che ma skyes pa bskyed par byed pa'i le'u] (chap. 1, 2, 3). These are:

1. Explaining the benefits of bodhicitta [byang chub sems kyi phan yon bshad pa'i le'u] [stanza 4-36]
2. Confessing negative deeds [65 stanzas] [sdig pa bshags pa'i le'u]
3. Thorough adoption of bodhicitta [33.5 stanzas] [byang chub sems yongs su gzung ba].

The second principal section, which includes the second three chapters, is titled 'Three chapters that prevent the decrease (of the precious bodhicitta) where it has arisen' [byang chub kyi sems rin po che skyes pa mi nyams par byed pa'i le'u gsum] (chap. 4,5,6). These are:

4. Heedfulness [48 stanzas] [bag yod]
5. Introspection [109 stanzas] [shes bzhin]
6. Patience [134 stanzas] [bzod pa].

The third principal section, which includes the third three chapters, is titled 'Three chapters that not only prevent the decrease (of the precious bodhicitta) but cause it to ever increase more and more' [byang chub kyi sems rin po che mi nyams par gong du spel ba'i le'u gsum] (chap. 7,8,9). These are:

7. Diligence [76 stanzas] [brtson 'grus]
8. Meditation [187 stanzas] [bsam gtan]
9. Transcendental knowledge [167 stanzas] [shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa].

The final principal section is a single chapter concerning dedication and is titled 'A single chapter concerning the dedication of the results that have thus been developed for the benefit of others' [de ltar spel ba'i 'bras bu gzhan don du bngo ba'i le'u gcig] (chap. 10). This is:

10. Dedication [57.5 stanzas] [bsngo ba].

Following this format of structuring the whole Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, the first three chapters deal with arousing bodhicitta. The second three chapters deal with how to

sustain bodhicitta and prevent it from being lost or diminished. The third three chapters deal with methods for increasing bodhicitta. The tenth chapter deals with the subject of dedication. You dedicate the benefits of bodhicitta, which you have aroused, sustained, and increased through the teachings of the previous nine chapters.

3. The third of the five points, the *meaning of the words* [tshig don], teaches that the teacher should first give an analysis of the individual words [tshig 'grel] and then an analysis of their meaning [don 'grel]. The teacher first explains each word of the text. The textual meaning must be discerned through an examination of the words and terms. Once the teacher has provided a detailed and unambiguous explanation of the terms, then he should explain the meaning of the text without any additions, omissions, or errors.

4. The fourth point, the *distinctions* [mtshams sbyor / bar mtshams], refers to the distinctions between terms [tshig gi mtshams sbyor] and also to the distinctions between related ideas [don gyi mtshams sbyor]. The teacher must clarify when words seem unrelated, when their relationship is ambiguous, or when their relationship is clear but contextually obscure. Concerning the relationship between ideas, the teacher begins the explanation by saying, for example, "That brief presentation can be elaborated upon in this way." In this manner the teacher gives clear distinctions [mtshams sbyor] of various aspects of the text and distinguishes the former sections from the latter.

5. The fifth point, the *responses* [lan] *to objections* [rgal], means that the teacher quotes various doubting opinions voiced in regard to each subject and then refutes them. Alternatively, the student may raise questions or objections, such as: "Are this point and that point not contradictory?" or, "How can this be so?" The teacher should then resolve such doubts and delineate the meaning of the text through arguments consistent with logic and supported by scriptural references.

If one wishes to apply these points in depth, the five great points can be applied not only to the treatise as a whole but also to each stanza of the treatise. A teacher must know the distinctions described above between the different (levels of) teachings, such as those of the provisional meaning [drang don], the definitive meaning [nges don], the four kinds of intention [dgongs pa rnam pa bzhi], and the four covert intentions [ldem dgongs rnam pa bzhi].

In addition to the five great points required for teaching the sūtras, a teacher of the tantras must be able to explain the tantras according to 'the six parameters' [mtha' drug] and 'the four styles' [tshul bzhi]. These points are the unique keys for appraising the scriptures of secret mantra, through which one may unlock their meaning. Without these specific keys it is utterly impossible to uncover and explain the meaning contained in any tantra of the Buddha.

The six parameters [mtha' drug] are: 1. the provisional meaning [drang don], 2. the definitive meaning [nges don], 3. the implied meaning [dgongs pa can], 4. the meaning that is not implied [dgongs pa can ma yin pa], 5. the literal expression [sgra ji bzhin pa], and 6. the figurative or non-literal expression [sgra ji bzhin ma yin pa].

The four styles [tshul bzhi], also known as the four styles of appraisal of the scriptures ['jal byed tshul bzhi], are: the lexical meaning [tshig gi don], the general meaning [spyi don], the concealed meaning [sbas don], and the ultimate meaning [mthar thug gi don].

Text section 128:

The *three key points* [chings gsum] are a condensation of the five great points. The first of the three points, *dividing the text into chronological sections, like the leaping of a tigress* [dkyus kyi sa gcod pa stag mo'i mchongs stangs lta bu], means that the teacher breaks the texts down into sections and sub-sections.

Paltrül Rinpoche structures the whole Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra according to three sections: 1. virtuous at the beginning, the meaning of the prefatory part [thog mar dge ba klad kyi don] refers to the introductory sections of the text; 2. virtuous in the middle, the meaning of the actual text [bar du dge ba gzhung gi don] refers to the actual text of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra; 3. virtuous at the end, the meaning of the conclusion [tha mar dge ba mjug gi don] refers to the concluding sections of the text.

This first key point also includes the first two of the five great points: 'the purpose' [dgos don] and 'the condensed meaning' [bsdus don] of the text.

The second of the three key points, *covering each syllable of the words like the sliding walk of a turtle* [tshig gi 'bru non pa rus sbal gyi nur 'gros lta bu], refers to 'the meaning of the words' [tshig don]. When a turtle walks, its belly always touches the ground. In the same way, the teacher explains all the words and their meanings, leaving nothing unexplained, without any omission or addition [chad lhag med pa].

The third of the three key points, the *occasional condensation of the meaning, like the graceful movement of a lion* [skabs kyi don bsdu ba seng ge'i 'gying lta bu], refers to 'the outline' [mtshams sbyor gyi don] and 'the responses to objections'. The metaphor of the graceful movement of the lion refers to a lion's noble manner. When a lion has jumped over an abyss, he gracefully looks back. Just as a lion looks gracefully back, the teacher condenses the meaning of what was previously explained.

Text sections 130-131:

Paltrül Rinpoche, Khenpo Kunpal's teacher, had studied and realized all the teachings of the Old and New Translation Schools. For him all Buddhist *texts* [gzhung lugs] were instruction manuals which always benefited his mind [sems la phan 'dogs pa'i gdams ngag]. It is a special feature of Buddhist texts that, if you know how to read them properly, they are all instructions that transform your mind.

Paltrül Rinpoche used to give commentaries on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra based on the main commentaries of the different schools and also on the root text itself. In the

latter part of his life, he based his explanations primarily on the commentary by Ngülchu Thogme Zangpo [dngul chu thogs med bzang po].[1419]

Text section 132:

Khenpo Kunpal was present and took notes [zin bris] when Paltrül Rinpoche was teaching the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra based on Ngülchu Thogme Zangpo's commentary to the great treasure revealer Chokgyur Dechen Zhikpo Lingpa[1420] and his sublime lineage children. These chronological notes, recently published by Tarthang Tulku,[1421] later became the main basis for Khenpo Kunpal's own commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra called 'Drops of Nectar' [bdud rtsi'i thig pa].[1422]

The colophon to this commentary[1423] indicates that Khenpo Kunpal also included teachings on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra that he received later from other sublime students [thugs sras dam pa] of Paltrül Rinpoche such as Öntrül Urgyen Tendzin Norbu [dbon sprul u rgyan bstan 'dzin nor bu]. From Öntrül on two occasions he received teachings on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra for a period of forty days. Other students of Paltrül Rinpoche also gave Khenpo Kunpal their notes [zin bris] on Paltrül Rinpoche's teachings.

Thus, Khenpo Kunpal truly preserved Paltrül Rinpoche's oral explanations [zhal rgyun]. Khenpo Kunpal wrote his commentary in a style that is easy for beginners to understand and beneficial for practice, avoiding scholastic elaborations.

In the context of Paltrül Rinpoche's oral explanations, the commentary written by Khenpo Thubten Chökyi Drakpa [thub bstan chos kyi grags pa], also known as Minyag Kunzang Sönam [mi nyag kun bzang bsod nams], should be mentioned as well. Minyag Kunzang studied for many years under Paltrül Rinpoche and wrote a very extensive commentary on the first eight chapters[1424] of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra and two commentaries on the ninth chapter.[1425]

Khenpo Kunpal says that Paltrül Rinpoche taught the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra for a period of six months at Dzogchen Monastery. Chokgyur Lingpa and members of his family were the most important guests at the teachings.

1419 See *dngul chu thogs med 'grel pa*.

1420 For biographical notes on the great treasure revealer Chokgyur Lingpa Dechen Zhigpo Lingpa [gter chen mchog gyur bde chen zhig po gling pa] (1829-1870 / 1879??) see *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, pages 841-848; and *mchog gling rnam thar 1-3*.

1421 See *dpal sprul zhal rgyun*.

1422 See *kun dpal 'grel pa*.

1423 See *kun dpal 'grel pa (si khron mi rigs edition)*, pages 813-815.

1424 See *mi nyag kun bzang 'grel chen*.

1425 See *mi nyag kun bzang sher 'grel 1 & 2*

Chokgyur Lingpa is mentioned in predictions given by Guru Rinpoche in the Padma Katang [pad ma bka' thang]. Therefore the phrase, *who is mentioned in the prophecies*, or *who has received the vajra-prophecies* [rdo rje'i lung gis zin pa] is used. The phrase '*sublime son*' or 'lineage-holding son' [rigs sras dam pa] refers to Chokgyur Lingpa's son Tsewang Trakpa [sras tshe dbang grags pa], also known as Wangchuk Dorje [dbang phyug rdo rje], who was present when Paltrül Rinpoche gave the teachings. Also Chokgyur Lingpa's daughter Könchok Paldrön [sras mo dkon mchog dpal sgron] and Chokgyur Lingpa's wife, Dega [bde dga'], were present, but Chokgyur Lingpa's other son, Tsewang Norbu [sras tshe dbang nor bu], did not attend the teachings.

Chokgyur Lingpa's biographies mention that he visited Dzogchen Monastery and headed a 'drupchen' at Urgyen Samtan Chöling[1426] when he was 39 years old. He met the fourth Dzogchen Rinpoche [sku phreng bzhi pa], Mingyur Namkhai Dorje [mi 'gyur nam mkha'i rdo rje], to whom he gave empowerments.[1427] He then met Paltrül Rinpoche and received from him the complete commentary [khrid rdzogs par gsan pa] on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. They also gave empowerments and teachings to each other and had a mutual relationship of student and teacher to one another.[1428] Furthermore, the biography reports that after Chokgyur Lingpa had received the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra from Paltrül, both masters completed the teaching with a non-conceptual dedication and made vast aspriations for the doctrine and beings.[1429]

According to Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche,[1430] Chokgyur Lingpa and his family stayed for only seven days of the teachings. Prior to the teachings, Chokgyur Lingpa had conferred empowerments of some of his own treasures upon Paltrül Rinpoche.

Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche stated that the teachings took place at Rudam Orgyen Samten Chöling [ru dam o rgyan bsam gtan chos gling]. Dzogchen Khenpo Chöga and Dzogchen Khenpo Rigdzin Tharchin [rig 'dzin thar phyin] speculate that some of the teachings might have taken place at Orgyen Samten Chöling and some at Śrī Siṃha Shedra.

While staying at Dzogchen Monastery, Chokgyur Lingpa wrote down a terma of Cakrasamvara as a revelation treasure text [gter ma]. He gave the empowerments to Paltrül Rinpoche and authorized him to be the dharma heir to this terma.[1431]

1426 *mchog gling rnam thar 3* says on page 117: "In his 39th year." A few lines later it also says: "In the third month [nag pa zla ba / hor zla gsum pa]." Then on page 118 it says: "In the second half of this month [zla ba de'i mar ngo], he acted as the vajra master for the 'Düpa Do Feast' ['dus pa mdo] at Dzogchen Orgyen Samten Choling [rdzogs chen o rgyan bsam gtan chos gling]."

1427 See *mchog gling rnam thar 1*, pages 396-397.

1428 See *mchog gling rnam thar 1*, pages 397-398.

1429 See *mchog gling rnam thar 1*, pages 400.

1430 Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche (1920-13.2.1996) was a renowned Dzogchen master and a direct descendant of Chokgyur Lingpa's family lineage.

1431 See *dpal sprul rnam thar*, folio 15a3-4.

Rudam Orgyen Samten Choling,[1432] the very first monastery at Dzogchen, was founded in 1685 by the first Dzogchen Rinpoche Pema Rigdzin,[1433] when he was 61 years of age, based on a prediction given by the fifth Dalai Lama.[1434] At the time of its establishment this monastery focused primarily on meditation and was considered a meditation center [sgrub grva / sgom grva].

The third Dzogchen Rinpoche Ngedon Tendzin Zangpo[1435] built a retreat center called 'Sangchen Ngedön Ling' [sgrub grva gsang chen nges don gling], also known as 'Ogmin Dechen Ling' [sgrub grva 'og min bde chen gling] next to Dzogchen Monastery. The third Dzogchen Rinpoche put thirteen people in that retreat center and all thirteen attained the rainbow body. They all received and practiced the instruction manual called 'White Path to Liberation' [khrid yig thar lam dkar po], which was written by the first Dzogchen Rinpoche.

Śrī Siṃha Shedra [śrī siṃha bshad grva / śrī siṃha chos grva] was named after the early master of the Dzogchen lineage, Śrī Siṃha, who had appeared in former times through his magical powers at that particular place in East Tibet, leaving the imprint of his back [sku rjes] in a rock. Later, the three great masters, the fourth Dzogchen Rinpoche [sku phreng bzhi pa] named Mingyur Namkhai Dorje,[1436] Gyalse Shenphen Thaye,[1437] and Do Khyentse Yeshe Dorje[1438] conducted 'the earth-claiming ritual' [sa 'dul] at the very spot where Śrī Siṃha had appeared and left his imprint.

At that time Do Khyentse Yeshe Dorje subdued all spirits and demons in the area. With his sword he traced the border within which the shedra was to be constructed. He also prophesied that in the future no obstructors [bgegs] or demons [rgyal 'gong] would be able to enter these premises or cause any harm within them. Then Do Khyentse Yeshe Dorje, Mingyur Namkhai Dorje, Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye and Khenchen Sengtruk Pema Tashi [mkhan chen seng phrug pad ma bkra shis] founded Śrī Siṃha Shedra.

1432 ru dam bsam gtan chos gling

1433 For biographical notes on the first Dzogchen Rinpoche Pema Rigdzin [pad ma rig 'dzin] (1625-1697) see *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, pages 736-737; *gu bkra'i chos 'byung*, pages 768-782; and *zhe chen rgyal tshab chos 'byung*, pages 301-303. His incarnation, the second Pema Ringdzin, was Gyurme Tekchok Tendzin ['gyur med theg mchog bstan 'dzin], born in 1699. For his biography see *zhe chen rgyal tshab chos 'byung*, pages 303-305.

1434 See *gu bkra'i chos 'byung*, page 780.

1435 nges don bstan 'dzin bzang po. For his biography see *zhe chen rgyal tshab chos 'byung*, pages 305-306.

1436 For biographical notes on Mingyur Namkhai Dorje [mi 'gyur nam mkha'i rdo rje], born in 1793, see *Masters of Meditation*, pages 175-178; and *zhe chen rgyal tshab chos 'byung*, pages 306-307.

1437 For biographical notes on Gyalse Shenphen Thaye [rgyal sras gzhan phan mtha' yas], born in 1800, see *Masters of Meditation*, pages 198-199.

1438 For biographical notes on Do Khyentse Yeshe Dorje [mdo mkhyen brtse ye shes rdo rje] (1800-1866) see *Masters of Meditation*, pages 179-197.

Khenchen Sengtruk Pema Tashi was the teacher of Gyalse Zhenphen Thaye. Khenchen Pema Dorje, a student of Gylase Zhenphen Thaye and classmate of Paltrül Rinpoche, became the first main khenpo, the Khenchen Tripa, at Śrī Siṃha Shedra. After Khenchen Pema Dorje, Paltrül Rinpoche (1808-1887) became Khenchen Tripa at Śrī Siṃha. Ju Mipham Rinpoche (1846-1912) also taught at Śrī Siṃha Shedra in the early days. Paltrül Rinpoche taught extensively on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra among other texts. These great masters started a lineage of the finest khenpos in East Tibet, thus greatly benefiting the buddha dharma.

In this way, Dzogchen Monastery maintains the three traditions ['khor lo rnam gsum] of monastic activities, meditation and study [bshad sgrub las gsum]. The tradition of monastic activities [bya ba las kyi 'khor lo] is maintained at Rudam Orgyen Samten Chöling Monastery. The tradition of solitary meditation practice [spong ba bsam gtan gyi 'khor lo] is maintained at the Sangchen Ngedön Ling retreat. The tradition of reading, studying and reflecting on the teachings [klog pa thos bsam gyi 'khor lo] is maintained at Śrī Siṃha Shedra.

Text section 136:

The general belief is that ancient India had 340 different languages. Among them were *four great and special canonical languages* [skad rigs chen po mi 'dra ba bzhi]: Sanskrit [legs sbyar; skr. saṃskṛt], Prākrit [rang bzhin], Apabhraṃśa [zur chag] and Piśāci [sha za]. Sūtras and treatises [bstan bcos; skr. śāstra] were written in all of these languages. Sanskrit is considered the most important among them and is known as the *divine language* [lha'i skad], the language that all buddhas of the three times spoke in the past, are speaking in the present and will speak in the future. The Tibetan translators have translated the term *Sanskrit* with *well composed* [legs sbyar].

Text section 138:

A treatise can be titled in different ways. The topic of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is the conduct of the bodhisattvas. The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is, therefore, a treatise that is titled according to its *topic* or *subject matter* [brjod bya]. A text can also be titled according to the range of its topic [rjod byed kyi tshad], such as in the 'Eight Thousand Verses',[1439] or according to its functions [byed las], meaning its power [nus stobs] or benefit [phan thogs pa], such as the 'Diamond Cutter'.[1440]

A text might be named according to a location [yul], like the 'Sūtra of the Journey to Laṇka'.[1441] It might be named according to a period of time [dus], such as the 'Sūtra of the Fortunate Aeon'.[1442] It could be named after the person [gang zag] who requested a

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1439 *Aṣṭa-sāhasrikā* [brgyad stong pa].

1440 *Vajracchedikā Prajñāpāramitā* [rdo rje gcod pa shes rab gyi pha rol tu phyin pa].

1441 *Laṇkāvatāra-sūtra* [lang kar gshegs pa'i mdo].

1442 *Bhadrakalpika-sūtra* [bskal pa bzang po'i mdo].

teaching, like the 'Sūtra Requested by Sāgarmati'.[1443] Likewise, a text could be named according to a metaphor [dpe], such as 'Jewel Cluster'.[1444] The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is named after its 'topic' [brjod bya], how to enter the conduct of the bodhisattvas.

Text sections 139-140:

Khenpo Kunpal explains the title *Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra* by citing various quotes from the scriptures. First, he explains the word *bodhi* in 'bodhisattva'. *Bodhi* [byang chub] has a twofold meaning: 'purified' [byang] and 'inclusive' [chub]. If the buddha nature [bde gshegs snying po] is 'purified' [byang] of the two momentary obscurations, obscurations of affliction [nyon mongs pa'i sgrib pa] and obscurations of cognition [shes bya'i sgrib pa], and of all habitual tendencies [bag chags], then all inherent qualities of the buddha nature are naturally 'included' or 'perfected' [chub]. That is the meaning of the quote from the *ye shes drva ba*.

The word *bodhi* has the same connotation as the word 'buddha' [sangs rgyas]. 'Buddha' means that all afflictive and cognitive obscurations have been 'purified' or 'removed' [sangs] and all wisdom qualities 'unfolded' [rgyas]. One aspect of the term *bodhi* denotes absence [med pa], the absence of all that should be overcome. Another aspect of the term *bodhi* denotes presence [yod pa], the presence of all that should be achieved and realized. 'Bodhi' and 'buddha' are both names for the final goal, the ultimate fruition, the aim we wish to achieve, the state of a completely enlightened buddha.

If you wish to speak of a person's condition in terms of what is present, you may say that a person is, for example, healthy. Describing a person's condition in terms of what is absent, you can say that a person is not sick. The terms 'buddha' or 'bodhi' indicate both presence and absence. The aspect of presence denotes that all possible wisdom qualities are present in the buddha nature. The aspect of absence denotes that all possible flaws have vanished. This is the usual dualistic approach through ideas and words that attempts to describe the utterly inconceivable, such as 'buddha' or 'bodhi'.

Text section 141:

Satva [sems dpa'] means 'hero', 'mind of courage' or 'courageous mind' [sems dpa' bo]. In order to make one's mind courageous or heroic, one needs to gather merit for many aeons. Buddha Śākyamuni, when he was still a bodhisattva, gathered the accumulation of merit for one countless aeon [bskal pa grangs med gcig]. Then, gaining the realization of buddha nature, he traversed, over the course of another countless aeon, from the first through the seventh bodhisattva levels. During the third countless aeon, he traversed from the eighth bodhisattva level to the level of a perfectly

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1443 *Sāgarmati-paripṛcchā-sūtra* [blo gros rgya mtshos zhus pa'i mdo].

1444 *Ratna-kūṭa* [dkon mchog brtegs pa].

enlightened buddha. A bodhisattva is not afraid to journey for such a long time toward enlightenment.

The ultimate courage is not to fear profound emptiness, the realization of buddha nature. Once one has gained unshakeable confidence in the realization of profound emptiness, one has reached the first bodhisattva level and from that moment onward will not be afraid to sacrifice one's life to attain 'bodhi' or 'buddhahood'.

Attaining confidence in the view of emptiness, one becomes an 'inner hero' [stong nyid lta ba la gdengs thob pa nang gi dpa' bo]. Based on this confidence, one has the courage to meet any given challenge and could even sacrifice one's body. For this reason the Buddha, when still a bodhisattva on the path to enlightenment, had the courage to undergo tremendous hardships simply to receive a single stanza of the dharma.

A bodhisattva, from the first bodhisattva level onward, has gained the 'heroic samadhi' [dpa' ba 'gro ba'i ting nge 'dzin], the realization of the view of emptiness. Only due to holding such confidence in his heart does he possess the courage to endure every possible hardship over the course of countless aeons. When Buddha Śākyamuni was still a bodhisattva, he held his body, health, and personal welfare to be completely insignificant and utterly meaningless in the face of the realization of emptiness, the ultimate goal of enlightenment.

Bodhisattvas know they have already taken innumerable bodies in former lifetimes; thus, they have no attachment to this present body. Their only aspiration is to attain complete realization of emptiness, the accomplishment of supreme enlightenment. Bodhisattvas express their internal courage and confidence in the view of emptiness through their conduct.

A practitioner who has the true courage of aspiring to enlightenment [sangs rgyas sgrub pa la dpa' bo], of aspiring to the view of profound emptiness, is a true bodhisattva. This is the definition of a bodhisattva. Every practitioner needs to develop courage or certainty in the view in order to meet any challenge in life without losing the view of emptiness.

A bodhisattva does not shy away from the commitment to liberate all beings and is not frightened by the infinite number of beings. Neither is he afraid to travese the path to complete enlightenment for three countless aeons; this infinitely long time-span does not intimidate him. While on this path, he never avoids any hardship or sacrifice that will benefit beings.

To be able to develop true bodhicitta in actuality, you must, to some degree, realize profound emptiness. Without the realization of emptiness you will lack the courage and confidence to truly commit yourself to the liberation of all sentient beings. A bodhisattva is stable in his mind [blo brtan pa]; his mind is immutable [blo 'gyur ba med pa].

Neither do bodhisattvas fear *suffering* [sdug bsngal]. They can bear any suffering, including sacrificing their body and possessions, and they are utterly stable in their bodhisattva conduct. *Negative-minded friends* [grogs ngan] will be unable to change their

minds in any way [blo gyur thub gi ma red]. Hearing the teachings on *profound* [zab mo] emptiness they neither become fearful nor succumb to the influence of doubt [the tshom dbang gi mi 'gro ba]. They are utterly *unshaken* [mi g.yo ba]. Thus, the bodhisattvas are described in the Sūtrālaṃkāra [mdo sde rgyan].

The Avataṃsaka-sūtra [phal po che mdo] provides an interesting example to illustrate the difference between the śrāvakas and bodhisattvas. When people witness a child falling into a cesspool, they are very concerned yet lack the courage to plunge into the filthy mire to rescue the child. The child's parents, however, would not hesitate for even a second before leaping into the pool without pausing to consider their own well-being. They simply have more love, compassion and affection for their child than the others present. A bodhisattva naturally experiences just such love and compassion for every sentient being.

The śrāvakas are similar to those others who would not hurl themselves into the cesspool to rescue the child. They do feel compassion and concern for the child but lack the bodhisattva's courage. Due to this lack of courage śrāvakas lack the power to express their compassion in action. They lack this courage because they have only realized that their individual ego has no identity, no self-nature [gang zag gi bdag med]. They have not realized that all phenomena are equally empty of self-nature [chos kyi bdag med]. Thus, they have realized only half of the equation of profound emptiness. Pratyekabuddhas have not only realized that their individual egos have no self-nature, but to a certain extent have also realized that all phenomena are similarly devoid of any self-nature.

Bodhisattvas have realized profound emptiness, the realization that their own personalities as well as all phenomena are actually empty of any self-nature. This realization is called non-dual wisdom [gnyis su med pa'i ye shes] and endows them with greater compassion for all sentient beings. Having no doubts, they do not hesitate to directly enter into any situation that could benefit beings. Such courage and compassion can only spring from absolute bodhicitta. This complete realization of bodhicitta clearly distinguishes followers of the Hīnayāna vehicle from followers of the Mahāyāna. Bodhisattvas are heroes who pursue the benefit of other beings without the slightest hesitation. The word bodhisattva means 'a courageous being determined to gain enlightenment'.

Śrāvakas have compassion but are not endowed with bodhicitta, neither relative nor absolute bodhicitta. The courage of the bodhisattvas stems from their realization of non-dual wisdom [gnyis su med pa'i ye shes], the realization of absolute bodhicitta [don dam byang chub sems].

If a practitioner has truly realized the primordial emptiness of all phenomena, great compassion toward all sentient beings will inevitably and naturally arise in his mind. When such a practitioner experiences a heartfelt wave of compassion, his realization of emptiness will greatly improve. Emptiness and compassion mutually enhance each other's development. The realization of emptiness and compassion is what transforms a practitioner into a bodhisattva, a courageous hero.

Absolute bodhicitta is the realization of the natural unity of unborn emptiness and non-conceptual compassion toward all beings. The more that compassion can arise, the more profound will one's realization of emptiness be. The deeper one's realization of emptiness, the greater will be the spontaneous manifestation of the power and depth of non-conceptual compassion. Emptiness and compassion inspire one another and accelerate progress along the path to complete enlightenment. This mutual inspiration is 'the perpetual motion of the wheel of dharma' [chos 'khor bskor ba].

Text section 142:

Concerning the word *carya*, 'conduct' [spyod pa], the great master Longchenpa said that the bodhisattvas must study and train in all fields of knowledge [shes bya'i gnas], such as the five sciences [rig gnas lnga] as well as in the sublime dharma [dam pa'i chos]. They must especially train in the six transcendental perfections.

Text section 143:

Carya means 'practice' [nyams len], 'conduct' [spyod pa], or 'action' [bya ba]. *Avatāra* means 'to enter', 'entering' or 'entrance' ['jug pa]. The title of this text, 'Entering the Conduct of the Bodhisattvas', indicates that the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra contains all necessary trainings and methods and is intended to enable a complete beginner to follow the conduct of the bodhisattvas. Through this text anyone can learn how to genuinely follow the bodhisattva example.

Text sections 144-145:

Both general and particular reasons are found for giving a title to a text. The general purpose comes from the simple fact that without titles, names, labels, terms and words, one will not be able to understand anything. For instance, in order to understand what is meant by the term 'emptiness', one must first have a word that denotes 'emptiness'.

The Buddha was forced to use words and terms in order to make his students understand a particular meaning. He named and labeled all his teachings with terms such as generosity, discipline, diligence, patience, meditation, wisdom-knowledge, and so forth. Had he not done so, no one would have understood him, and the whole world would have continued to languish in abject ignorance.

In particular, the title Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra was given to demonstrate the topic of this text. Those of highest capacity would be able to understand the entire meaning of the text from beginning to end upon simply hearing or reading the title. Those of average capacity would have a general understanding of what the text is about, and those of lowest capacity could easily locate the book based on its title, just as one easily finds a particular medicine based on the label.

Text section 146:

A Buddhist treatise like this text always begins in the same way: "In the Sanskrit language, the title is *Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra*." Then, the text goes on: "In the Tibetan language, the title is *byang chub sems dpa'i spyod pa la 'jug pa*." In this way the Tibetan translators of Buddhist texts always preserved the original Sanskrit title by leaving the title untranslated [sor bzhag tu smros pa / ma 'gyur bar smros pa]. They reproduced the Sanskrit title in Tibetan characters so that the Tibetan readers could reproduce the sounds of the Sanskrit syllables. There are four reasons for this.

Text section 147:

(1) The Sanskrit title shows that the text is of authentic origin and inspires trust and faith in the treatise within the reader's mind. Since all the Buddhist treatises came to Tibet from India, the Sanskrit title written in Tibetan characters authenticates the text. If a canonical Tibetan treatise could not convincingly prove its Indian origin, Tibetan scholars would not accept it. India is considered to be the *genuine source of dharma* [chos khungs btsun pa / chos khungs dvangs ma]. A famous text called the Guhyagarbha-tantra,[1445] one of the most important tantras of the Old Translation School, was belittled by scholars from other schools as a fabrication by Old Translation School scholars. Fortunately, an Indian manuscript of this tantra was eventually recovered, and the credibility of the text was finally established beyond any doubt.

Text section 148:

(2) Tibetan people believe that all buddhas of the three times have previously taught, presently teach and in the future will continue to teach in Sanskrit. As the language of all the buddhas, *Sanskrit* [legs sbyar] is considered to be the *divine language* [lha'i skad] and to carry tremendous blessings. When the reader recites the title in Sanskrit, therefore, the stream of blessing of all the buddhas will enter into his mind.

Buddhas teach the dharma through the miraculous display of their corresponding speech [gsung rjes su mthun pa'i cho 'phrul]. This means that each member of the audience hears the teachings in his own language. Nāgas, for instance, will perceive the teachings in nāga language; gods in god language; and humans in their personal language or dialect.

The buddhas, therefore, do not need interpreters because they can communicate directly with each being according to his culture, language, capacities and needs. One should not limit the Buddha's language to Sanskrit alone, but since the dharma was translated into Tibetan from Sanskrit texts, Tibetan people consider Sanskrit to be the language of all the buddhas.

Text section 149:

1445 For the critics of the *Guhyagarbha-tantra* [rgyud gsang snying] see *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, pages 914-917.

(3) Reciting the title in Sanskrit will plant the seeds of habitual tendencies in the minds of the readers. Once they have attained buddhahood in the future, they will be able to teach the dharma in Sanskrit themselves.

Text section 150:

(4) The Sanskrit title, which Tibetans find very difficult to read and to pronounce, reminds the reader of the immense kindness of the translators, who underwent great difficulties by traveling to India, learning Sanskrit, and translating treatises into Tibetan. The reader becomes aware that if the entire text were left untranslated, one would neither be able to understand or to explain the text at all.

Text section 151-153:

The translator always inserts an homage after the title and before the actual translation of the text. Here, in the case of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, the homage goes: *Homage to all buddhas and bodhisattvas!* [sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' thams cad la phyag 'tshal lo]. This refers to all the buddhas of the ten directions and the three times [phyogs bcu dus gsum gyi sangs rgyas thams cad] as well as to all bodhisattvas.

The *forefather dharma kings* [chos rgyal yab mes] are Songtsen Gampo [srong btsan sgam po] and Trisong Detsen [khri srong lde'u btsan]. During their reign no rules were made concerning the translator's homage at the beginning of a translation. Later however, King Ralpachen [mnga' bdag ral pa can] decreed that all translators had to start their translations with an invocation which identified the category of the text. He ordered that all vinaya translations start with the phrase: *Homage to the Omniscient One* [thams cad mkhyen pa la phyag 'tshal lo], all sūtra translations with: *Homage to all buddhas and bodhisattvas* [sangs rgyas dang byang chub sems dpa' thams cad la phyag 'tshal lo], and all abhidharma translations with: *Homage to the noble Mañjuśrīkumārabhāta* ['phags pa 'jam dpal gzhon nur gyur pa]. As the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra belongs to the sūtra teachings, it begins with the sūtra homage: *Homage to all buddhas and bodhisattvas*. Many Mahāyāna sūtras were requested by bodhisattvas from other world systems. By paying homage the translator ensures that no obstacles will arise for his translation of the text and that he will succeed in completing the entire translation.

Under King Ralpachen's rule a new dharma language was also established. Earlier, each translator had coined his own personal translation terminology; no common agreement about terminology existed. King Ralpachen gathered all the major translators and had them establish a uniform terminology on which everyone could agree. The king also ordered a reformation of the old orthography [brda rnying]. Düjom Rinpoche writes:[1446]

> He invited Surendrabodhi, Śīlendrabodhi, Dānaśīla and many other paṇḍitas from India. He commanded them, along with the Tibetan

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[1446] *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, page 522; and *bdud 'joms chos 'byung*, page 136.

> preceptor Ratnarakṣita and Dharmatāśīla, and the translator Jñānasena, as follows:
>
> "Formerly, when the doctrine was translated by paṇḍitas and translators in the time of my parental ancestors [yab mes kyi dus], many terms were used which were unknown to the Tibetan language. Replace those terms among them which contradict the texts of the dharma and the system of grammar [lun du ston pa; skr. vyākaraṇa], as well as those which are hard to understand, by searching (for alternatives) among the best terms of the colloquial language [yul skad kyi ming gces so 'tshal]. Thus, you should improve the translations [bsgyur bcos gyis] according to the texts of the greater and lesser vehicles."

In order to establish the country in the dharma, King Ralpachen studied all scriptures and saw that some teachings were based on Chinese texts, some on Indian texts and others on Nepalese or Oḍḍiyāna texts. Some texts even began with homage to ancestral deities and had an inconsistent dharma terminology [chos skad]. He decreed: "Since the Buddha lived in India, and since the dharma was first taught in India, all teachings must be unified based on the Indian language." He ordered the correction of all incorrect translations that had been done previously and the completion of all unfinished translations.

Furthermore, he ordered the translation of boundless sūtras and tantras that had not been translated previously. All translations were corrected based on original texts from India. If a text did not begin with the phrase "In the Indian language" King Ralpachen did not accept the translation. He considered that since India was the place of origin of all teachings, translations based on Indian texts were of 'genuine origin' [khungs btsun pa]. The translators under King Ralpachen had to be excellently trained in grammar, both Sanskrit and Tibetan.

King Ralpachen's activity included the establishment of three types of great spiritual institutions [chos grva chen mo gsum]: universities, monasteries and retreat centers. He established twelve institutions for training in study and contemplation [thos bsam blo sbyong gi grva bcu gnyis]; six institutions for scholastic and monastic activities [mkhas btsun stangs 'bul gyi grva drug]; and six institutions for silent retreat [smra bcad sems phyogs kyi grva drug].

Crucial information about the translation history of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra can as well be gathered from the colophon of the text. The colophon identifies the main translators and their translation team, as well as the Indian scholars who assisted the translators in their work. The colophon removes all doubts about the text's authenticity, proving it to be a genuine teaching that came from India. This tradition of opening with the Sanskrit title and concluding with a detailed colophon guards against any fabrication of teachings.

The great translator Kawa Paltsek (8th-9th century), assisted by the Indian scholar Sarvajñādeva, translated the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra from Sanskrit into Tibetan for

the first time. Kawa Paltsek for the most part used Sanskrit editions and manuscripts from the region of Kashmir in western India.

About a hundred years later, the Indian scholar Dharmaśrībhadra and the two Tibetan translators, Rinchen Zangpo (958-1055) and Śākya Lodro, corrected and re-translated the text by using Sanskrit editions and commentaries from the Central Land [yul dbus, skr. madhyadeśa]. The term 'Central Land' refers to the heartland of India, all the ancient kingdoms in the area of the Ganges river.

Subsequently, about one hundred years later, the Indian scholar Sumatikīrti and the translator Ngok Lochen Loden Sherab (1059-1109) corrected, re-translated, and finalized the text. The Tibetans regard this last version as the definitive edition. It thus required three Indian scholars and many Tibetan translators to produce a definitive version over a period of more than two hundred years.

A translation of Khenpo Kunpal's commentary[1447] on this colophon, which is entitled 'the Explanation of the Translator's Colophon' [lo tsā ba'i 'gyur byang bshad pa], follows:

> Fourth, what is meant by the 'Early Translation (Period)' [snga 'gyur rnying ma ba] and the 'Later Translation (Period)' [phyi 'gyur gsar ma pa] in regard to the teachings?
>
> The 'Early Translation (Period)' [snga 'gyur rnying ma] refers to all the sūtras and tantras including their commentaries [dgongs 'grel] which were translated during the time of the incarnations of the noble lords of the three families, the kings who sponsored the dharma: Songtsen Gampo, Trisong Detsen and Ruler Tri Ralpachen; (translated) from the time of the Indian paṇḍitas, the native-language-speaking Indian scholars [bsgyur yul paṇḍita], such as Devaviṭsiṃha[1448] onward until the great paṇḍita Smṛtijñāna,[1449] and from the time of the translator Thumi Sambhoṭa onward until the omniscient Dharmabhadra from Rongzom (1012-1088) [rong zom kun mkhyen dharma bha dra].[1450]

1447 *kun dpal 'grel pa (si khron mi rigs edition)*, pages 808-810

1448 Devavitsiṃha [lha rig pa'i seng ge] was the Sanskrit teacher of Thumi Sambhoṭa. See *Blue Annals*, page 218.

1449 The Indian scholar Smṛtijñānakīrti lived in the late tenth or early eleventh century. He came to Tibet and corrected the translations of some of the tantras and translated some commentaries on the secret mantra and composed some treatises on grammar. He passed away in East Tibet. Note that both Khenpo Kunpal and Khenpo Chöga include Smṛtijñānakīrti in the Early Translation Period, although his lifetime falls clearly in the Later Translation Period. See *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, page 703.

1450 Note that both Khenpo Kunpal and Khenpo Chöga include Rongzompa in the Early Translation Period, although his lifetime clearly falls in the Later Translation Period.

The tantras, commentaries and few minor sūtras that were later translated by Rinchen Zangpo (958-1055) and others are considered to belong to the 'Later Translation (Period)' [phyi 'gyur gsar ma].

In fact, all these (teachings of the Early and Later Translation Periods) constitute the precious doctrine of our compassionate master, the Buddha, the Bhagavān, the victorious Śākyamuni. Moreover, the sublime beings who uphold this (doctrine) are themselves endowed with the view of the four seals of his teachings [bka' rtags kyi phyag rgya bzhi]. Therefore, since all their activities of body, speech and mind are on the sky-like level of absolute truth [chos sku'i klong du], by nature utterly indivisible, one finds no sectarianism or bias whatsoever.

This text (of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra) was composed in Sanskrit. At the time of the Early Translation (Period), when (the explanation lineage of this text) still existed in the noble land of India, the great Indian scholar Sarvajñādeva, which means the 'Omniscient Deity' [thams cad mkhyen pa'i lha], and the translator and chief editor *(annotation), the monk Kawa Paltsek, translated (the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra) into the Tibetan language based on editions from Kashmir. They edited (the text), meaning they corrected it, and then finalized [gtan la phab pa] it by having it explained (again by the paṇḍita) and studied (as a teaching for the translator). Having done so, they generated great benefit for all fortunate ones.

*Annotation [nang tshan]: as the great translator Ngok (Loden Sherab) [rngog lo chen po] said:

Vairocana was equal to the limits of space.
The three—Ka,[1451] Chok,[1452] and Zhang—[1453] were like the sun, the moon and their unity.
Rinchen Zangpo was like the great morning star.
I am just a mere firefly.

Later, the Indian scholar Dharmaśrībhadra, which means 'Noble and Glorious Dharma' [chos dpal bzang po], the monk Rinchen Zangpo (958-1055), translator and chief editor, and Śākya Lodro [śākya blo gros] corrected, re-translated, and finalized (the text) in accordance with editions and commentaries from the Central Land.

Again, at a later time, the Indian scholar Sumatikīrti, which means the 'Scholar, the One renowned for his Excellent Intelligence' [mkhas pa legs

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1451 The translator Kawa Paltsek [ska ba dpal brtsegs].

1452 The translator Chokro Lui Gyaltsen [cog ro klu'i rgyal mtshan].

1453 The translator Zhang Yeshe De [zhang ye shes sde].

pa'i blo gros grags pa], and the monk Ngok Lochen Loden Sherab (1059-1109) [rngog lo chen blo ldan shes rab], translator and chief editor, corrected, re-translated and finalized it in an excellent manner.

In the commentary by Sazang[1454] it says: 'Sumatikīrti, the Nepalese Paṇḍita'.[1455] It also says that the three later translators 'have improved (the translation) by correcting and editing, which means they finalized it'. And furthermore it says, 'I corrected all the minor mistakes which (have appeared since) by examining Indian editions and commentaries'.[1456]

bzhi pa ni / de la bstan pa la snga 'gyur dang phyi 'gyur zhes pa ji ltar yin na 'phags pa rigs gsum mgon po'i rnam 'phrul sbyin bdag chos rgyal srong btsan sgom po dang / khri srong lde'u btsan dang mnga' bdag khri ral can ste bsgyur yul paṇḍita lha rig pa'i seng ge nas paṇ chen smṛti jñāna'i bar dang / 'gyur byed thu mi sam bho ṭa nas rong zom kun mkhyen dharma bha dra'i bar du bsgyur ba'i mdo rgyud dgongs 'grel dang bcas pa rnams la snga 'gyur rnying ma zhes grags la /

phyis su lo chen rin chen bzang po la sogs pas bsgyur ba'i rgyud 'grel pa dang mdo phran 'ga' zhig bcas bsgyur ba la phyi 'gyur gsar ma zhes grags na'ang don du de thams cad bdag cag gi ston pa thugs rje can sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das rgyal ba shākya thub pa'i bstan pa rin po che dang de 'dzin pa'i skyes bu dam pa lta ba bka' rtags kyi phyag rgya bzhi dang ldan pas gsang gsum gyi mdzad spyod thams cad chos sku'i klong du mkha' ltar dbyer mi phyed pa'i bdag nyid can kho na yin pas na phyogs dang ris su gcod par bya ba ci yang med do //

gzhung 'di'ang legs sbyar gyi skad du brtsams shing rgya gar 'phags pa'i yul na gnas pa la snga 'gyur gyi dus su **rgya gar gyi mkhan po** chen po sarva **jñāna deva** ste thams cad mkhyen pa' lha **dang** / **zhu chen gyi lo tsā ba** ni rngog lo chen pos /

vai ro tsa na nam mkha' mtha' dang mnyam / /
ska cog zhang gsum nyi zla zung 'brel dang //
rin chen bzang po tho rangs skar chen 'dra //
kho bo cag ni srin bu me khyer tsam //

zhes pa'i nang tshan **bande** ska ba **dpal brtsegs kyis kha che'i dpe las** bod kyi skad du **bsgyur cing zhus te** zhes zhu dag kyang mdzad de 'chad nyan gyis **gtan la phab pa las** skal ldan rnams la phan pa rgya chen po mdzad pa'o //

slad kyis rgya gar gyi mkhan po dharma śrī bha dra ste chos dpal bzang po **dang** / **zhu chen gyi lo tsā ba bande rin chen bzang po dang** / **śākya blo gros kyis yul dbus kyi dpe dang 'grel pa dang mthun par bcos shing bsgyur te gtan la phab pa'o** //

1454 sa bzang 'grel chen.

1455 See also the root text of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra in Peking Tan-gyur Vol. 100, page 1, folio 45a: bal po'i paṇḍita Sumatikīrti dang /

1456 *sa bzang 'grel ba*, page 443, folio 222a.

yang dus phyis rgya gar gyi mkhan po su ma ti kīrti ste mkhas pa legs pa'i blo gros grags pa dang / **zhu chen gyi lo tsā ba dge slong** rngog lo chen po **blo ldan shes rab kyis** kyang **dag par bcos shing bsgyur te legs par gtan la phab pa'o** //

zhes pa 'dir sa bzang 'grel par bal po'i paṇḍita su ma ti kīrti zhes dang / lo tsā ba phyi ma gsum gyis bcos shing zhus te dag par byas te gtan la phab pa'o zhes dang / bar skabs su cung zad ma dag par song ba rnams bdag gis kyang rgya dpe dang 'grel pa la gtugs te dag par bgyis pa'o zhes gsungs so //

Khenpo Chöga comments that the great Tibetan scholar Rongzompa Dharmabhadra said that the Early Translation Period [snga 'gyur rnying ma] was superior to the Later Translation Period in six ways [khyad par du 'phags pa'i che ba drug]. Düjom Rinpoche quotes Rongzompa Dharmabhadra:[1457]

> (1) The greatness of the benefactors [yon bdag gi che ba]: Since the benefactors of the Early Translation Period were the three ancestral dharma kings who were the emanations of the lords of the three families [rigs gsum mgon po], they are unlike the benefactors of the Later Translation Period.

The three ancestral dharma kings [chos rgyal mes dbon rnam gsum] were Songtsen Gampo [srong btsan sgam po], Trisong Detsen [khri srong lde btsan], and King Tri Ralpachen [mnga' bdag khri ral pa can]. King Songtsen Gampo was considered to be an emanation of the bodhisattva Avalokiteśvara; King Trisong Detsen was considered to be an emanation of the bodhisattva Mañjuśrī; and King Tri Ralpachen was regarded as an emanation of the bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi. These three bodhisattvas are called 'the lords of the three families' [rigs gsum dgon po].

Mañjuśrī is the embodiment of the wisdom [mkhyen pa'i rigs] of all the buddhas, Avalokiteśvara the embodiment of the compassion [brtse ba'i rigs] of all the buddhas, and Vajrapāṇi the embodiment of the activities [nus pa'i rigs] of all the buddhas. The body manifestation [sku'i rigs] of all the buddhas is Mañjuśrī; the speech manifestation [gsung gi rigs] of all the buddhas is Avalokiteśvara; and the mind manifestation [thugs kyi rigs] of all the buddhas is Vajrapāṇi. Düjom Rinpoche's quotation of Rongzompa Dharmabhadra continues:[1458]

> (2) The greatness of the location where the teachings were translated and finalized [gang du bsgyur zhing gtan la phab pa'i gnas kyi che ba]: Since the locations in which the teachings were translated and finalized were the emanated temples [sprul pa'i gtsug lag khang] such as Samye and others, the high and low centers of the doctrine [chos 'khor stod smad], they are unlike those translated in the monastic enclaves [dgon pa'i phag phug] of today.

1457 *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, pages 889; and *bdud 'joms chos 'byung*, pages 570-572.

1458 *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, page 889.

At the time of King Songtsen Gampo, the texts were translated in his palace. At the time of King Trisong Detsen, the translations were done in the temple of Samye. At the time of King Tri Ralpachen, the translators and paṇḍitas worked in the temple of Ushang Doyi Lhakhang ['u shang rdo'i lha khang] and in the temple of Phang-Thang Kame ['phang thang ka med gyi gtsug lag khang]. Düjom Rinpoche's quotation of Rongzompa Dharmabhadra continues:[1459]

> (3) The distinction of the greatness of the translators [sgyur byed lo tsā ba'i khyad par ni / sgyur byed lo tsā ba'i che ba]: These teachings were translated by emanated translators, by the translators of the past such as Vairocana [bai ro tsa na], Kawa Paltsek [ska ba dpal brtegs], Cokro Lui Gyaltsen [cog ro klu'i rgyal mtshan], Zhang Yeshe De [zhang ye shes sde], Ma Rinchen Chok [rma rin chen mchog], Nyak Jñānakumāra [gnyags jñāna ku mā ra] and others. Thus, they are unlike the translations made by the translators of today, who pass the summer in Mangyul and travel to India and Nepal for a short time during the winter.

All the translators ['gyur byed / sgyur byed] from Thumi Sambhoṭa onward until the great scholar Rongzom Mahāpaṇḍita Dharmabhadra are called the translators of the Early Translation Period. These translators always worked on their translations with a great scholar from India, in that way ensuring proper translation of the texts. A translation made by a Tibetan translator who did not consult an Indian scholar was not regarded as a proper translation. Düjom Rinpoche's quotation of Rongzompa Dharmabhadra continues:[1460]

> (4) The distinction of the greatness of the paṇḍitas [paṇḍita'i khyad par ni / paṇḍita'i che ba]: Those teachings were brought (to Tibet) by buddhas and sublime bodhisattvas abiding on the great (bodhisattva) levels, (namely) the paṇḍitas of the past, such as the preceptor Śāntarakṣita, Buddhaguhya, the great master Padmasambhava, the great paṇḍita Vimalamitra, and others. Thus, they were unlike the paṇḍitas of today, who wander about in search of gold.

During the time of the three ancestral dharma kings, more than one hundred paṇḍitas were invited from India. Among them were great masters and scholars such as the master Padmasambhava [slob dpon pad ma 'byung gnas], the preceptor Śāntarakṣita [mkhan po zhi ba 'tsho], Buddhaguhya [sangs rgyas gsang ba], the great paṇḍita Vimalamitra [paṇ chen bi ma la mi tra], Devaviṭsiṃha [lha rig pa'i seng ge], Sarvajñādeva [sarva jñāna deva], and so forth up to the time of the great Indian scholar Smṛtijñānakīrti.

The masters and scholars whom the Tibetan kings and translators invited to Tibet all possessed higher perceptions and magical powers and had a true realization of the

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1459 *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, page 889.

1460 *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, page 889.

buddha dharma. These masters were all great bodhisattvas. Therefore, the Early Translation Period had the greatness of the paṇḍitas. Düjom Rinpoche's quotation of Rongzompa Dharmabhadra continues:[1461]

> 5) The distinction of the greatness of the offerings for requesting (the teachings) [zhu rten me tog gi khyad par ni / zhu rten mandal gyi che ba]: In the past the teachings were requested with offerings of gold weighed in deerskin pouches [sha ba'i blud gang] or by volume measures [bre la gzhal nas]. Thus, they were unlike the requests (by the students) of the present day made with one or two old pieces drawn from under their arms.

The three ancestral kings would offer as much gold as fits in a deerskin pouch to each Indian paṇḍita when they requested them to help the Tibetan translators in their endeavors to translate texts from Sanskrit into Tibetan. Düjom Rinpoche's quotation of Rongzompa Dharmabhadra continues:[1462]

> 6) The distinction of the greatness of the teachings [chos kyi khyad par ni / chos kyi che ba]: The translations of the past were completed at a time when the doctrine of the Buddha had reached its zenith in India. Furthermore, certain tantras did not even exist in the Central Land but were retained by bodhisattvas, accomplished masters [grub pa], knowledge-holders [rig pa 'dzin pa] and ḍākinīs who had obtained their empowerments. These were taken from pure lands and from regions of Jambudvīpa such as Siṇghala and Oḍḍiyāna in the West, through the miraculous deeds [rdzu 'phrul gyi bkod pa] of the great masters Padmasambhava, Vimalamitra and others, and then they were translated (in Tibet). Thus, many teachings which were completely unknown to the scholars and accomplished masters of India arrived to become the meritorious fortune of Tibet (at a later time)."
>
> Furthermore, concerning the translations themselves: Since the translators of the past were emanations, they established the meaning correctly. Therefore, their works are easy to understand and, on plumbing their depths [byings mjal ba la], the blessings are great. Translators of the later period, however, failed to render the meaning [don bsgyur] but made literal translations [sgra bsgyur] (merely) by following the arrangement of the Sanskrit texts [rgya dpe'i go rim]. Consequently, their stilted terminology [tshig grims] is hard to understand, and on plumbing the depths, the blessing is slight. Therefore, they are dissimilar.

Düjom Rinpoche's quotation of Rongzompa Dharmabhadra continues:[1463]

1461 *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, pages 889-890.

1462 *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, page 890.

1463 *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, pages 890-891.

> When the doctrine of the Buddha was at its zenith [gra ma nymas pa'i dus su], the emanated translators finalized (the texts of) the teachings without error. They determined the actual condition of knowledge [shes bya dgnos po'i 'dug tshul] and adorned the teachings in many ways which served to complete them. But the charlatan translators of the present day made various reforms in the ancient translations, saying, "I am a better translator. My sources are more venerable!"
>
> And so, misrepresenting the transmitted precepts of the Buddha and the teachings of their gurus, they all compose their own doctrines. They heap abuse upon one another for their own faults. Their doctrines are such that those of the father do not suit the son. (In all of this) they are unlike (the Early Translation Period).

The majority of the sūtras contained in the Kangyur were already translated at the time of the Early Translation Period. The tantras, commentaries, and a few minor sūtras that were translated later on by Rinchen Zangpo and others are known as translations of the Later Translation Period [phyi 'gyur gsar ma].

Any teaching that does not accord with the *four seals of the teachings* [bka' rtags kyi phyag rgya bzhi] does not accord with the teachings of the Buddha. These four seals are:

> Everything compounded is impermanent.
> Everything defiling is suffering.
> Nirvāṇa is peace.
> All phenomena are empty and without a self.
>
> 'du byed thams cad ni mi rtag pa'o
> zag pa dang bcas pa ni sdug bsngal ba'o
> mya ngan las 'das pa ni zhi ba'o
> chos thams cad stong zhing bdag med pa'o

The term *translator and chief editor* [zhu chen gyi lo tsā ba] refers to the main translator and editor among a team of translators. Within the team, he was the most skilled translator, working closely on the texts with the Indian paṇḍita. He was also in charge of final editing as he had the decision-making power. Longchenpa said:

> The translator and chief editor [zhu chen gyi lo tsā ba] was in those days an accomplished scholar [mkhas pa mthar phyin pa] who was in charge of editing, someone who could be trusted. But (a translation) had to accord with (Sanskrit) poetry and grammar when changed from the Indian text into the Tibetan language or (back again) from the Tibetan text into the Indian language. This was an extremely difficult task.[1464]

1464 See *klong chen chos 'byung*, page 375-376: de yang zhu chen gyi lo tsā ba zhes bya ba ni / de'i tshe mkhas pa mthar phyin pa des zhus dag byas nas yid ches ba'i gnas yin pa'am / yang

Thus, each translation had to be retranslated into Sanskrit and had to read perfectly. Each text was translated cooperatively by the Tibetan translator and the Indian scholar. Then the translation was revised and edited until it was flawless [ma nor bar zhu dag byas]. After all the work had been completed, the text was finalized as an authoritative translation by expounding and studying it ['chad nyan gyis gtan la phab pa]. For these reasons the translations of the earlier translation period are truly trustworthy.

At that point in the colophon, Khenpo Kunpal inserts a quote from Ngok Loden Sherab, as a footnote or annotation [nang tshan], explaining to whom the term 'translator and chief editor' refers. Ngok Loden Sherab here evaluates the great Tibetan translators: Vairocana as the best; Kawa Paltsek, Cokro Lui Gyaltshan and Zhang Yeshe De as second best; Rinchen Zangpo as third best; and himself as the very least. Ngok Loden Sherab composed this praise to the former translators when he was reworking the translation of the Sūtrālaṃkāra [mdo sde rgyan], originally done by Kawa Paltsek.

In the writings of Zhechen Gyaltshab[1465] we find the following reference, which differs slightly from Khenpo Kunpal's quotation of Ngok's praise:

> When the great translator Ngok, supreme among the later translators, was confronted in the *Sūtrālaṃkāra*[1466] with the words "ra ga ra ga" (khrag med khrag med) alone, he did not know how to translate them. Looking up the old translations he was amazed by the translation 'neither attached nor clinging' [ma chags mi chags] and so forth. He then composed this great praise to the translators of the Old School:
>
> Vairocana was equal to the limits of space;
> The two, Ka and Cok, were like the unity of sun and moon;
> Rinchen Zangpo was like the great morning star;
> I am just a mere firefly.
>
> phyis kyi lo tsa'i nang nas mchog tu gyur pa'i rngog lo tsā ba chen pos kyang / mdo rgyan nang ra ga ra ga'i sgra kho na snang bas 'gyur ma shes / snga 'gyur gzigs pas / ma chags mi chags sogs su bsgyur ba la ya mtshan skyes ste
>
> vai ro tsā na nam mkha' dag dang mnyam
> ska cog rnam gnyis nyi zla zung gcig la
> rin chen bzang po tho rang skar chen tsam

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na rgya dpe las bod skad du ston nam / bod dpe las rgya skad du ston na sdeb sbyor sgra dang mthun par 'ong ba ste / 'di ni srid pa'ang shin tu dka' ste /

1465 *zhe chen rgyal tshab chos 'byung*, page 96.

1466 See *Sūtrālaṃkāra*, page 73: ma chags mi chags chags pa med

ko bo de drung srin bu me khyer bzhin

zhes snga 'gyur gyi lo tsā ba la bsngags pa cher mdzad cing /

The profound points of the sūtra and tantra sections cannot be translated into the Tibetan language without a perfect understanding of the etymology of the words [nges pa'i tshig]. Since there was previously no terminology [brda chad] in Tibetan for translating the scriptures, a new system had to be established. As one single Sanskrit term has various synonyms and meanings, it proved impossible to cover all implications of a term with a superficial translation. In particular, the words of the tantras are in most cases sealed with the six modes [mtha' drug gis rgyas btab pa]; unless one has higher perceptions they cannot be translated.

The translators of the Old School translated all the teachings of the sūtras and tantras according to their meaning [don 'gyur mdzad pa] without the slightest error. Thus, these teachings and translations are not an object for intellectuals to meddle with [rtog ge'i yul ma yin pa]. The words of these old translations are magnificent [bying che ba], easy to understand [go bde ba], poetic [snyan pa] and correct [legs pa]. When the scholar-translators of the Later Translation Period [phyis kyi lo tsā ba] compared all the Sanskrit and Tibetan texts, they gained genuine trust in these translations as they could find nothing to correct. All the later translators followed the rules and terminology laid down in the Mahāvyutpatti [bye brag rtogs byed] and the *sgra sbyor bam po gnyis pa*, two texts which became the standard dictionary for all Tibetan translators.

Based on editions from Kashmir [kha che'i dpe las] means texts from Kashmir, the north-western part of India [rgya gar nub phyogs]. First, the translators, under the supervision of Kawa Paltsek, *translated* [bsgyur cing] the text with the help of the Indian scholar, Sarvajñādeva. Then they *edited* [zhus te] the translation. This *means they corrected it* [zhu dag kyang mdzad de] by having the Indian scholar once again *explain* the text to them ['chad nyan gyis]. In this way they could *finalize* [gtan la phab pa] the text. The term 'finalize' [gtan la phab pa] means that the translators came up with a translation they considered definitive.

Text section 158:

These four steps of approaching the text: (1) declaring respect, (2) pledging to compose (the text), (3) casting away pride, and (4) generating joy can be applied to any work or activity one undertakes. You especially need these four steps when you study, contemplate or meditate on the teachings.

'Declaring respect' in dharma and worldly situations means that in order to transform your mind, you at first supplicate [gsol 'debs], make aspirations [smon lam], utter praises [bstod par brjod pa] and go for refuge [skyabs su 'gro ba] in the buddhas, bodhisattvas and lineage masters. Through supplication [gsol 'debs] you bring energy [nus pa] to your mind.

Next, you need to make a pledge or firm resolve [dam bca'] to study, contemplate and meditate on the dharma. Pledging to carry out such a task stabilizes your mind. Then

you should humble yourself and not allow yourself to become proud. On the other hand you should not be too timid either. You should study, contemplate and meditate on the dharma with joy in your heart.

The Buddha teaches us to avoid the two extremes [mtha' gnyis spong ba]. Concerning the view [lta ba], one must avoid the extremes of eternalism [rtag mtha'] and nihilism [chad mtha']. In regard to meditation [sgom pa], one needs to be on guard against falling into the extremes of drowsiness [bying ba] or agitation [rgod pa]. Finally, regarding the conduct [spyod pa], avoid the extreme of sense gratification ['dod pa bsod nyams kyi mtha'] as well as the extreme of hardship and penance [ngal zhing dub pa'i mtha'].

When you start your meditation in the morning, first pay respect to the buddhas and your lineage masters by supplicating them in order to bring down their blessing to transform your mind. You pray to them, "May the precious bodhicitta be born in my mind." Then you make the firm resolve to meditate on bodhicitta, without any distraction, for the duration of your entire meditation session.

You must further cultivate a motivation which is both modest and humble. You should not meditate motivated by arrogance and pride. Neither should you meditate in a timid frame of mind. Do not think, "This is all too difficult. How could someone like me ever develop the precious bodhicitta?" You must establish in yourself the confidence that you are perfectly able to meditate on bodhicitta. Practice then with a heart overflowing with joy and inspiration.

Text section 159:

This section, called *declaration of respect* [mchod par brjod pa], deals with the first two lines of the first stanza. Traditionally, the author of a treatise would express his respectful praise to the deity of his choice right in the beginning, before starting his actual composition. Here, Śāntideva shows his devotion by praising the three jewels: the Buddha, the dharma, and the saṃgha.

The purpose of 'declaring respect' [mchod par brjod pa] is to open your mind [sems sgo phye ba'i don dag]. Recollecting the qualities of the buddhas, bodhisattvas and the lineage masters, you declare respect. The phrase 'delaration of respect' primarily connotes 'paying respect' or 'paying homage' or 'offering prostration' [phyag 'tshal ba], as well as 'supplicating' [gsol bar 'debs pa] and 'expressing respectful praises' [gus bstod byed pa].

Declaring respect allows the blessings to enter into your mind-stream [byin rlabs rgyud la 'jug pa'i phyir du]. Unless the blessings of the buddhas, bodhisattvas, and lineage masters enter into your mind-stream, your mind will not be transformed ['gyur ba].

The *path of bliss* [lam bde ba] is identical with the path or *vehicle of the bodhisattvas* [byang chub sems dpa'i theg pa]. It is the path of the precious bodhicitta motivation and the application of the six transcendental perfections. The bodhisattvas utterly rejoice in benefiting others. Their sole motivation is to free all beings from suffering and to establish them on the level of perfect enlightenment. To accomplish this benefit for

others is the highest bliss [bde ba bla na med pa] for a bodhisattva. Once a bodhisattva has reached the first bodhisattva level, which corresponds to the path of seeing [mthong lam], the realization of the natural state, he has overcome all obscurations of affliction and hence is free from gross manifestations of suffering. Through the supreme path, the bodhisattvas themselves reach the level of perfect enlightenment, *the fruition of bliss* ['bras bu bde ba]. The attainment of perfect enlightenment is the highest bliss possible.

The Sanskrit term *sugata* is a synonym for the Buddha and means 'bliss-gone' or 'the one gone to bliss' [bde bar gshegs pa]. *Bliss* [bde ba], in this context, connotes 'liberation' [thar ba] or 'nirvāṇa' [myang ngan las 'das pa] and *gone* [gshegs pa] connotes 'having arrived at'. A buddha is someone who has reached the highest level of bliss, nirvāṇa, liberation, enlightenment or buddhahood.

Text sections 160-161:

Khenpo Kunpal lists three interpretations of the term 'sugata': (1) *excellently or beautifully gone* [legs pa'am mdzes par gshegs pa], (2) *gone without returning* [slar mi ldog par gshegs pa], and (3) *perfectly or completely gone* [rdzogs pa'am ma lus par gshegs pa].

This three-fold interpretation of the term 'sugata' can also be exlained by the terms *overcoming* [spangs pa] and *realization* [rtogs pa], both individually and in conjunction with one another. Such a scholastic explanation of the Indian and Tibetan scholars follows in the next text sections:

Text section 162:

(1) The individual explanation of *overcoming* [spang pa], as included in the first interpretation of the term 'sugata', is, as the text says: *'Excellently or beautifully gone,' meaning that (the Buddha) has gone excellently or beautifully, as he is untainted by the defects of (the truth of) suffering and (the truth of) its origination, (both of) which point at afflictions.*

Buddha is not tainted by the defects of the truth of suffering [sdug / sdug bsngal gyi bden pa] and the truth of origination [kun / kun 'byung gi bden pa], which both concern saṃsāra, the realm of afflictions [kun nyon 'khor ba'i phyogs]. Afflictions [kun nyon] are understood to be 'totally polluted' or 'utterly defiled' [kun nas btsog pa / kun nas nyon mongs pa]. The truth of origination refers to karma [las] and afflictions [nyon mongs pa]. Karma is enacted by body, speech and mind. The term *afflictions* refers to the six main afflictions [rtsa ba'i nyon mongs pa drug / rtsa nyon drug], the twenty secondary afflictions [nye ba'i nyon mongs pa nyi shu / nye nyon nyi shu] as well as the three or five mind poisons.[1467]

[1467] For a detailed discussion of afflictions see *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. II*, pages 121-139.

The six main afflictions [rtsa nyon drug] are: 1) ignorance [ma rig pa], 2) desire ['dod chags], 3) aggression or anger [khong khro], 4) pride [nga rgyal], 5) doubt [the tshom], and 6) wrong views or wrong believes [lta ba].

The twenty secondary or subsidiary afflictions [nye nyon nyi shu] are: 1) anger [khro ba], 2) holding a grudge ['khon 'dzin pa], 3) concealment ['chab pa], 4) spiteful anger ['tshig pa], 5) jealousy [phrag dog], 6) miserliness [ser sna], 7) hypocrisy [sgyu], 8) pretense [g.yo], 9) haughtiness [rgyags pa], 10) resentment [rnam par 'tshe ba], 11) lack of a sense of shame [ngo tsha med pa], 12) lack of a sense of embarrassment [khrel med pa], 13) dullness [rmugs pa], 14) agitation [rgod pa], 15) lack of faith [ma dad pa], 16) laziness [le lo], 17) heedlessness [bag med pa], 18) forgetfulness [brjed ngas pa], 19) distraction [rnam g.yeng], and 20) lack of introspection [shes bzhin ma yin pa].

The three mind poisons [dug gsum] or the three afflictions [nyon mongs gsum] are: 1) desire ['dod chags], 2) aversion [zhe sdang] and 3) ignorance [gti mug]. The five mind poisons [dug lnga / nyon mongs dug lnga] are: 1) desire ['dod chags], 2) aversion [zhe sdang], 3) ignorance [gti mug], 4) arrogance [nga rgyal], and 5) jealousy [phrag dog].

Because the Buddha has 'overcome' [spongs pa] the obscurations of afflictions [nyon sgrib] as well as all obscurations of cognition [shes sgrib], he has thus excellently or beautifully gone [legs pa'am mdzes par gshegs pa]. Buddha is not tainted any longer by karma and afflictions because he gathered the accumulations of merit and wisdom for three countless aeons. He overcame all there is to overcome.

The example for being untainted by afflictions is that of a person with a beautiful body. As the Buddha is free from all suffering and the origination of suffering, he can be compared to a beautiful person washed utterly clean. The Buddha has surpassed saṃsāra, the truths of suffering and the origination of suffering. Therefore, he has excellently or beautifully gone [legs pa'am mdzes par gshegs pa]. Worldly beings have not transcended suffering, its causes and their fruition. 'Worldly beings' [srid pa rnams] are all beings within the three realms of saṃsāra [srid pa khams gsum 'khor ba].

The cause for suffering [sdug bsngal gyi rgyu] is the truth of origination [kun 'byung gi bden pa]. The truth of origination refers to karma and afflictions. Karma and afflictions arise from holding on to ego [bdag 'dzin]. Ego-clinging results from ignorance [ma rig pa]. As sentient beings have not realized the wisdom of egolessness [bdag med rtogs pa'i shes rab], they are constantly involved in afflictions and thus create karma. They create the causes for suffering and experience the fruition of suffering.

Text section 163:

(2) The individual explanation of *realization* [rtogs pa], as included in the second interpretation of the term 'sugata', is that since the Buddha has 'realized' the natural state as it is, he has *gone without returning* [chos nyid gyi don ji lta ba bzhin du rtogs pas na slar mi ldog par gshegs pa].

Gone without returning [phyir mi ldog par gshegs pa] means that the Buddha has eradicated the seeds of the view of an identity [bdag lta / ngar 'dzin], and, consequently,

he does not return to saṃsāra, just as firewood which has been burned will not again flare up.

The sugatas have 'realized' the wisdom of egolessness [bdag med rtogs pa'i shes rab]. They are free from holding on to an identity [bdag 'dzin]. They have totally eradicated ignorance [ma rig pa] and can never fall back into saṃsāra. The example is a person who has recovered from smallpox [rims nad], because after recovering from smallpox one is then immune.

The Buddha has surpassed all the paths of the tīrthikas. Even when the tīrthikas reach the peak of worldly existence, they can never go beyond the confines of worldly existence [srid pa]. The great masters of the tīrthika systems can reach saṃsāra's peak but never go beyond that point because they have not realized the wisdom of egolessness. Tīrthika masters can temporarily overcome gross afflictions, but they never attain the wisdom of egolessness.

Tīrthika meditation masters at best take rebrith in the subtle spheres of the realms of formlessness [gzugs med khams]. These are the most subtle states within saṃsāra and are reached through worldly meditation ['jig rten pa'i bsam gtan] that still holds on to ego.[1468] Once the karma to remain in these states is exhausted, the tīrthika meditation masters again fall into the lower realms. The Buddha has reached a state completely beyond saṃsāric existence and can, therefore, never fall back into any of saṃsāra's three realms. The three realms [khams gsum] of saṃsāra are the realm of desire ['dod khams], the realm of form [gzugs khams], and the realm of formlessness [gzugs med khams]. Therefore, the Buddha is vastly superior to all tīrthika teachers.

Text section 164:

(3) The combined explanation of the terms *overcoming* and *realization*, as included in the third interpretation of the term 'sugata', is *perfectly or completely gone* [ma lus pa'am rdzogs par gshegs pa] and means the Buddha has attained the supreme qualities of perfect overcoming and perfect realization without the slightest degree of anything remaining to be attained. He has perfectly 'overcome' [spongs pa] all that there is to overcome, namely the truth of suffering [sdug bsngal gyi bden pa] and the truth of origination [kun 'byung gi bden pa].

The Buddha has also perfectly realized all that there is to 'realize' [rtogs pa], namely the relative truth [kun rdzog gyi bden pa] and the absolute truth [don dam gyi bden pa]. Therefore, he has perfectly or completely gone. There is not even the slightest degree

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1468 There are 'four formless realms' [gzugs med khams pa'i gnas bzhi], which are called ,the four absorptions of the realm of formlessness' [gzugs ped pa'i snyoms 'jug bzhi]: 1) the field of infinite space [nam mkha' mtha' ya kyi skye mched], 2) the field of infinite consciousness [rnam shes mtha' yas kyi skye mched], 3) the field of nothing whatsoever [ci yang med pa'i skye mched], and 4) the field of neither perception nor non-perception ['du shes med 'du shes med min gyi skye mched]. See *Myriad Worlds*, pages 123-125.

of anything remaining to be overcome or realized. Therefore, the example is that of a vase filled to the brim.

What must be overcome are the obscurations of afflictions [nyon mongs pa'i sgrib pa] and the obscurations of cognition [shes bya'i sgrib pa]. The Buddha has overcome both, including their most subtle aspects. What must be realized is the wisdom of the twofold knowledge [mkhyen pa gnyis]: the wisdom of knowing the natural state as it actually is [gnas lugs ji lta ba mkhyen pa'i ye shes], and the wisdom of knowing all there is to know [shes bya ji snyed pa mkhyen pa'i ye shes]. The Buddha has realized the ultimate wisdom [ye shes mthar thug pa] and has thus reached omniscience. Absolutely nothing remains to be attained.

In *his manner of having thus gone* [gshegs tshul], the Buddha has completely surpassed the śrāvakas and the pratyekabuddhas with his perfect qualities of overcoming and realization. Though they will not fall back into saṃsāra, they have not completely developed all qualities of 'overcoming' and 'realization' and are therefore only *partially* [nyi tshe ba / chung chung] realized.

A simple interpretation of the term 'sugata' [bde bar gshegs pa] follows. As he has gone to the blissful level of buddhahood, based on the blissful cause of the precious bodhicitta, he is called the 'sugata', 'the one who has gone to bliss' [rgyu bde ba byang chub sems rin po che la brten nas 'bras bu bde ba sangs rgyas kyi go 'phang la gshegs pa].

Text sections 165-166:

The *dharmakāya of realization* [rtogs pa chos sku] is the wisdom [ye shes] realized by the Buddha. The *dharmakāya of the doctrine* is the expression [rtsal] of Buddha's wisdom, the spoken teachings of the Buddha, the dharma. The Buddha's realization [rtogs pa] is dharma [chos] as is also the doctrine [bstan pa] that he teaches. The dharma that the Buddha has in his mind is called the 'dharmakāya of realization'; the dharma he teaches, which he expresses verbally, is called the 'dharmakāya of the doctrine'. Therefore, the phrase 'endowed with the dharmakāya' [chos kyi sku mnga'] connotes 'dharma' [chos] as the second jewel among the three: Buddha, dharma and saṃgha. It also connotes Buddha's realization from where the dharma stems.

The 'dharmakāya of the doctrine' means that, based upon the Buddha as the cause, the words and letters of the teachings appear for those to be tamed [bdag rkyen sangs rgyas la brten nas gdul bya de nyid gyi sgra dang yi ge rnam par snang]. Therefore, the root text says in stanza one: "The sugatas, who are endowed with the dharmakāya,…" [bde gshegs chos kyi sku mnga'].

In other words, the 'dharmakāya of realization' is the wisdom of knowing the natural state as it is [ji lta ba mkhyen pa'i ye shes], and the 'dharmakāya of the doctrine' is the wisdom of knowing all that can be known [ji snyed pa mkhyen pa'i ye shes], which is omniscience. These wisdoms are inseparable.

'Kāya' [sku] in the term dharmakāya [chos kyi sku] means 'support for qualities' [yon tan gyi rten]. Literally , dharmakāya means 'body of dharma' [chos kyi sku / chos kyi lus po],

a term connoting 'support for the dharma' [chos kyi rten], both support for the dharma of realization [rtogs pa'i chos] and support for the dharma of the doctrine [bstan pa'i chos].

'Dharma' also refers to wisdom [ye shes] and 'kāya' to the perception aspect of it [mthong rgyu yod pa]. 'Kāya' actually means 'body' [lus po] and has also the connotation of 'appearance' and 'perception'. In other words, there is something there—a wisdom body—that can be seen or that manifests but only to the Buddha. Therefore, dharmakāya means 'wisdom appearance' or 'wisdom perception' [ye shes kyi snang ba].

The term 'saṃbhogakāya' [longs sku] denotes the support for the wisdom of great bliss [bde ba chen po'i ye shes kyi rten]. 'Nirmāṇakāya' [sprul sku] denotes the support or basis that gives rise to inconceivable emanations [sprul pa bsam gyis mi khyab pa'i 'char ba'i gzhi'am rten].

One who is endowed with the qualities of the dharmakāya [chos kyi sku'i yon tan mnga' ba po] is a buddha. Among the three jewels this is the jewel of the Buddha. The jewel of the dharma has the twofold meaning, the dharmakāya of realization and the dharmakāya of the doctrine.

Moreover, the term 'dharmakāya', 'body of dharma' [chos kyi sku] can be interpreted at various levels. In this context, 'dharma' [chos] refers to the natural state [gnas lugs], to emptiness [stong pa nyid]. The nature [rang bzhin] or the 'expression' [gdangs] of this emptiness is called 'body' [sku, skr. kaya] or 'manifestation' [snang ba]. In this case 'body' and 'appearance' have the same meaning. The Buddha is thus endowed [mnga' ba] with the dharmakāya.

The empty essence [ngo bo stong pa] of the dharmakāya is called the 'expanse dharmakāya' [dbyings chos sku]. The cognizant nature [rang bzhin gsal ba] of the dharmakāya is called the 'wisdom dharmakāya' [ye shes chos sku]. The Buddha is endowed with both the 'expanse dharmakāya' and the 'wisdom dharmakāya'.

The dharmakāya of realization [rtogs pa chos sku] and the dharmakāya of the doctrine [bstan pa chos sku] can also be explained in other ways. The 'dharmakāya of realization' can refer to the wisdom [ye shes] of the Buddha. The 'dharmakāya of the doctrine' can refer to the teachings and scriptures that are principally concerned with the truth of cessation ['gog bden] and the truth of the path [lam bden]. The truth of cessation and the truth of the path are known as the 'dharmakāya of realization' [rtogs pa chos sku], or the 'actual dharmakāya' [chos sku mtshan nyid pa]. The scriptures or teachings that manifest from this wisdom are called the 'dharmakāya of the doctrine'.

The dharmakāya of realization [rtogs pa chos sku] is the realization of the truth of cessation ['gog bden]. The truth of cessation is endowed with a nature of twofold purity [dag pa gnyis ldan gyi rang bzhin], the 'nature of perfect purity' [rang bzhin rnam dag] and the 'transtemporal purity' [glo bur bral dag]. The 'nature of perfect purity' [rang bzhin rnam dag] means that the nature of one's mind is primordially pure [ye nas dag pa]. The nature of the mind is primordial buddhahood [ye sangs rgyas pa] and has never experienced any stain or defect.

The 'transtemporal purity' [glo bur bral dag] refers to the afflictions which arise temporarily. All afflictions [nyon mongs; skr. kleśa] and habitual patterns [bag chags] are compounded phenomena ['dus byas kyi chos]. They are neither primordial nor uncompounded and, therefore, can be completely eliminated. In the face of the realization of dharmakāya they are entirely absent. This explains 'transtemporal purity'.

The dharmakāya of realzation, the truth of cessation, is gained through non-dual wisdom [zag med gyi shes rab], where no distinction any longer exists between subject [yul can] and object [yul]. The dharmakāya of the doctrine refers to the teachings and scriptures that establish this realization.

The 'dharmakāya of the doctrine' also includes the teacher of the profound way [zab mo'i tshul ston pa] and the teacher of the manifold way [sna tshogs pa'i tshul ston pa]. These two teachers refer to the saṃbhogakāya and the nirmāṇakāya respectively.

Generally, a buddha is endowed with the three kayas: dharmakāya, saṃbhogakāya and nirmāṇakāya. The dharmakāya is said to have the nature of twofold purity [dag pa gnyis ldan gyi rang bzhin] as described above. The saṃbhogakāya is endowed with the five certainties [longs sku'i nges pa lnga], which are (1) certainty of place: the saṃbhogakāya buddhas dwell only in the Akaniṣṭha realm [gnas 'og min stug po bkod pa kho nar bzhugs pa]; (2) certainty of time: they remain until saṃsāra is emptied [dus 'khor ba ma stongs bar du bzhugs pa]; (3) certainty of body: their bodies are distinctly ornamented with the major marks and minor signs [sku mtshan dpe gsal rdzogs kyis spras pa]; (4) certainty of entourage: they are surrounded exclusively by noble beings of the Mahāyāna ['khor theg chen 'phags pa sha stag gis bksor ba]; and (5) certainty of the teachings: to this noble entourage they exclusively teach the Mahāyāna dharma [de la chos theg chen gyi chos 'ba' zhig gsungs pa].

Concerning the nirmāṇakāya, different nirmāṇakāya or emanations are distinguished: the 'supreme nirmāṇakāya' [mchog gi sprul sku], the 'created nirmāṇakāya' [bso ba sprul sku], the 'rebirth nirmāṇakāya' [skye ba sprul sku], and the 'manifold nirmāṇakāya' [sna tshogs sprul sku]. All these different distinctions of dharmakāya, saṃbhogakāya and nirmāṇakāya refer to the jewel of the Buddha [sangs rgyas dkon mchog], first among the three jewels.

We can, however, distinguish between different nirmāṇakāya or emanations of the Buddha. Buddha Śākyamuni himself is called the 'supreme nirmāṇakāya' [mchog gi sprul sku]. His body, speech and mind are beyond compare [mnyam med]; his qualities are beyond imagination. A 'supreme nirmāṇakāya' like Buddha Śākyamuni teaches sentient beings through the twelve great deeds [mdzad pa bcu gnyis]. The twelve deeds of the Buddha are [sangs rgyas kyi mdzad pa bcu gnyis]:

1. Descending from Tuṣita's heavenly place [dga' ldan nas 'pho ba'i mdzad pa].
2. Entering the womb [lhums su zhugs pa'i mdzad pa].
3. Birth [sku bltams pa'i mdzad pa].
4. Demonstrating his physical prowess [sgyu rtsal bstan pa'i mdzad pa].

5. Enjoying the company of his queen [btsun mo'i 'khor gyis rol pa'i mdzad pa].
6. Leaving home [khyim nas mngon par 'byung ba'i mdzad pa].
7. Undergoing penance [dka' ba spyad pa'i mdzad pa].
8. Realizing the essence of enlightenment [byang chub snying por gshegs pa'i mdzad pa].
9. Defeating the māras [bdud sde 'dul ba'i mdzad pa].
10. Total awakening [mngon par byang chub pa'i mdzad pa].
11. Turning the wheel of dharma [chos kyi 'khor lo bskor ba'i mdzad pa].
12. Entering into nirvāṇa [mya ngan las 'das pa'i mdzad pa].

A 'created nirmāṇakāya' [bso ba sprul sku] is an emanation of the Buddha that looks exactly like him and gives teachings. Examples of these are the six munis, each of which manifests as a buddha in one of the six realms of saṃsāra. The term 'created nirmāṇakāya' does not refer to statues or thangkas of the Buddha, which are created by human beings, and are instead called 'manifold nirmāṇakāya'.

Another type of nirmāṇakāya results when the minds of advanced dharma practitioners receive the Buddha's blessings in the bardo, the intermediate state. When these practitioners are subsequently reborn, they are known as 'rebirth nirmāṇakāyas'. The Mahāyāna sūtra tradition refers to such consciousnesses which have been blesssed in the bardo as 'tulkus', nirmāṇakāyas. This occurance is a merging of the Buddha's blessings with the mind of an advanced practitioner. Meditating at all times on the Buddha establishes the auspicious conditions for the Buddha's emanations to merge with one's mind in the bardo. When this occurs it is called a 'rebirth nirmāṇakāya', a 'tulku'.

A tenth level bodhisattva becomes a fully enlightened buddha at the very moment that the bodhisattva realizes the genuine dharmakāya of the Buddha. That moment is called 'fully realizing the dharmakāya' [chos sku mngon du gyur ba]. The moment a practitioner realizes the genuine saṃbhogakāya, he becomes a genuine bodhisattva [byang chub sems dpa' mtshan nyid pa]. This is possible from the first bodhisattva level onward. From the first to the tenth level he will perceive and realize different levels of the saṃbhogakāya.

'Manifold nirmāṇakāya' [sna tshogs sprul sku] refers to all representations of the Buddha's body, speech and mind [sku gsung thugs rten]. It refers also to relics of the Buddha as well as to anything which can benefit sentient beings, such as lotus flowers, jewels, medicine, food, clothing, vehicles, bridges, and so forth.

The utterly immaculate dharmadhātu [chos dbyings shin tu dri med pa], the expanse of dharma, connotes the dharmakāya of realization [rtogs pa chos sku]. The dharmadhātu [chos kyi dbyings] is inseparable from wisdom [ye shes], and it is wisdom that recognizes the dharmadhātu [chos kyi dbyings ha go mkhan de ye shes zer gi red]. The realization of dharmadhātu, as it is in itself [ji lta ba bzhin du], is called the dharmakāya of realization.

Conducive to the cause of its (realization) [de yi rgyu dang mthun pa] means 'conducive to the causes of the wisdom that realizes the utterly immaculate dharmadhātu [chos kyi dbyings shin tu dri ma med pa rtogs pa'i ye shes de yi rgyu dang mthun pa].

The *profound* [zab pa] refers to profound emptiness [zab pa stong pa nyid]. *Manifold* [sna tshogs] denotes the vast classifications of the teachings [bstan pa'i rnam bzhag rgya che ba]. In both sūtra and tantra we find the distinction into what is known as 'profound teachings' and 'vast teachings' [zab pa dang rgya che ba'i chos].

The 'profound' and 'vast' teachings are *a manifestation* [ston pa'o] of the enlightened mind of the Buddha, similar to his own realization. The teachings only manifest 'similar to' and are *conducive to* [de yi rgyu dang mthun pa] the Buddha's realization because the dharmadhātu itself cannot immediately manifest in the mind-stream of a sentient being as it is in reality. The Buddha's realization replicates in the mind-stream of beings according to the degree of realization they can achieve.

Since the Buddha is endowed with the wisdom that realizes the dharmadhātu as it actually is in itself [ji lta ba bzhin du], the dharmakāya of realization, his wisdom has the power to give rise [ston thub pa'i nus pa / 'char thub pa'i nus pa] to many profound and vast teachings. This is the dharmakāya of the doctrine and is also the twofold knowledge [mkhyen pa gnyis] of the Buddha. Truly realizing the natural state as it is [gnas lugs ji lta ba bzhin du mkhyen tshar nas], one also gains omniscience, the knowledge of all that can be known [shes bya ji snyed pa bzhin du mkhyen pa]. Paltrül Rinpoche said:

> If one knows (the natural state) as it is but cannot see all that can be known,
> Then even if one (appears to be) a noble being, this is still not the enlightened mind of the Victor.
>
> ji ltar mkhyen cing ji snyed mi gzigs pa'i
> 'phags pa yod na rgyal ba'i dgongs pa min

Text section 167:

After completing the commentary on what is meant by 'the jewel of the dharma', Khenpo Kunpal proceeds to explain 'the jewel of the saṃgha'. The Buddha has three sons: his *physcial son* [sku'i sras], the *sons of his speech* [gsung gi sras], and the *sons of his mind* [thugs ky sras]. Rāhula was his physical son. The śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas are the sons of his speech, and the bodhisattvas are the sons of his mind. Generally, these are collectively known as the jewel of the saṃgha [dge 'dun dkon mchog], the third of the three jewels. Here, 'saṃgha' [dge 'dun] means 'those aspiring to virtue, whose minds will not divert from virtuous actions' [thugs dge ba la 'dun zhing dge ba'i las las slar mi ldog pa].

One should be aware that, in text section 169, Khenpo Kunpal explicitly classifies the bodhisattvas as the Mahāyāna saṃgha and counts them among the three jewels. In

text section 170, he classifies the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas as being 'worthy of veneration'.

When Buddha Śākyamuni was the young prince Siddhārtha [gzhon nu don grub], he married Yaśodharā [grangs 'dzin ma], Gopā [sa 'tsho ma] and Mrigaja [ri dvags skyes]. His union with Gopa produced Rāhula, *his physical son* [sku'i sras]. The śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas are called the *sons of his speech* [gung gi sras] because they attained liberation by listening to and practicing the dharma he taught them. They have arisen from his speech.

Text section 168:

The bodhisattvas are the sons of Buddha's mind because they are his true *successors* [rgyal ba'i gdung 'dzin pa]. Eventually they will attain complete enlightenment and themselves become buddhas. They will then lead the bodhisattvas from their own entourage to complete enlightenment. The bodhisattvas are called the 'Mahāyāna saṃgha' [theg chen dge 'dun], while the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas are called the 'Hīnayāna saṃgha' [theg chung dge 'dun].

With this understanding, Śāntideva pays homage to the Buddha and his sons. Paying homage to the Buddha and the saṃgha, the dharma is automatically included, since the dharma naturally dwells in the minds of the Buddha and the saṃgha. The dharma includes the wisdom of statements and the wisdom of realization, both of which abide in the minds of the Buddha and the bodhisattvas. Together they constitute the jewel of the dharma [chos dkon mchog], second among the three jewels.

The 'teachings of statements' [lung gi chos] is a term referring to all the teachings the Buddha has given: the complete tripiṭaka, 'the three baskets' [sde snod gsum] of the teachings. These are: 1) the vinaya piṭaka, 'the basket of discipline' ['dul ba'i sde snod]; 2) the sūtra piṭaka, 'the basket of discourses' [mdo sde'i sde snod]; and 3) the abhidharma piṭaka, 'the basket of the doctrine' [mngon pa'i sde snod].

The 'teachings of the statements' [lung gi chos] can also be divided into the twelve sections of scriptures [gsung rab yan lag bcu gnyis]. The wisdom of statements is the wisdom which knows all the statements of the tripiṭaka [lung sde snod gsum ha go ba'i ye shes]. The wisdom of these three baskets of teachings abides within the minds of the Buddha and the bodhisattvas, those who have realized the teachings of the tripiṭaka [lung sde snod gsum rtogs pa'i shes rab].

The twelve sections of scriptures [gsung rab yan lag bcu gnyis] are: 1) sūtra [mdo'i sde], 2) aphorisms in prose and verse [dbyangs kyis bsnyad pa'i sde], 3) prophetic declarations [lung du bstan pa'i sde], 4) verses [tshigs su bcad pa'i sde], 5) meaningful expressions [ched du brjod pa'i sde], 6) narratives [gleng gzhi'i sde], 7) parables [rtogs pa brjod pa'i sde], 8) legends [de lta bu byung ba'i sde], 9) tales of past lives [skyes pa'i rabs kyi sde], 10) extensive teachings [shin tu rgyas pa], 11) marvelous events [rmad du byung ba'i sde], and 12) established instructions [gtan la phab pa'i sde].

The 'teachings of realization' [rtogs pa'i chos] is a term referring to the three precious trainings [bslab pa rin po che rnam pa gsum]: 1) the training in discipline [tshul khrims kyi bslab pa], 2) the training in samādhi [ting nge 'dzin gyi bslab pa], and 3) the training in knowledge [shes rab kyi bslab pa]. The wisdom of realization is the wisdom that comes from the practice of the three trainings [rtogs pa bslab pa gsum nyams len byed pa'i ye shes]. All buddhas and bodhisattvas train in discipline and samādhi and hold knowledge in their minds.

Thus, one should understand that the sublime dharma is the wisdom of statements and the wisdom of realization, both of which abide in the minds of the Buddha and the bodhisattvas. The dharma is the mind that has realized wisdom. The Buddhist books and scriptures are mere representations or replicas [tshab] of the sublime dharma, not the actual dharma.

In this way the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra has introduced the three jewels. 'Jewel' [dkon mchog] is the English translation of the Tibetan word 'könchok', itself derived from the Sanskrit word 'ratna'. Ratna connotes 'jewel' [rin po che / rin chen]. In this world the three jewels are as 'rare' [dkon] and as 'supreme' [mchog du gyur pa] as a jewel [rin po che].

The three jewels possess the six qualities [chos drug] of a jewel [rin po che]:

1. The three jewels are of 'rare appearance' ['byung bar dkon pa], as they do not manifest unless beings have accumulated sufficient merit. Like a jewel, they are difficult to find. The appearance of a buddha is very rare. For three countless aeons Buddha Śākymuni gathered the accumulations of merit and wisdom and purified afflictive and cognitive obscurations. Unless beings have accumulated sufficient merit, a buddha does not appear. Without a buddha, there is neither dharma nor saṃgha. Buddha Śākyamuni is the only Buddha who ever appeared in a time when the five degenerations were widespread. He made five hundred great aspirations to particularly benefit beings of lesser merit in such a time. Had Buddha Śākyamuni not made these great aspirations, due to our insufficient merit, the three jewels would not even be mentioned. The five degenerations [snyigs ma lnga] are the degeneration of time [dus kyi snyigs], the degeneration of sentient beings [sems can gyi snyigs ma], the degeneration of lifespan [tshe'i snyigs ma], the degeneration of actions [las kyi snyigs ma], and the degeneration of afflictions [nyon mongs pa'i snyigs ma]. Sometimes the degeneration of views [lta ba'i snyigs ma] is listed instead of the degeneration of actions.
2. The three jewels are 'immaculate' [dri ma med pa], naturally without stains just as a jewel is free from flaws and imperfections. Buddha himself is utterly unblemished. His body, speech and mind have not the slightest flaw. The sublime dharma is immaculate because both the 'pronouncements of the tripiṭaka' [lung sde snod gsum] and the 'teachings that lead to realization, namely the three trainings' [rtogs pa'i chos bslab pa gsum], are flawless in word and meaning. The saṃgha, though not utterly unblemished, is on the path to becoming so.

3. The three jewels are 'powerful' [mthu dang ldan pa] as they benefit oneself and others. The example is a magic jewel, which enables one to accomplish whatever one wishes. The Buddha is powerful because he has attained the dharmakāya for his own benefit and has manifested the rūpakāya for the benefit of others. The sublime dharma is powerful because it leads to liberation and enlightenment. The saṃgha is powerful as it holds the knowledge of the path to liberation and enlightenment and as it explains that knowledge to others.
4. The three jewels are the 'ornamentation of the world' ['jig rten gyi rgyan], causing wholesome thoughts in beings and thus beautifying the world, as a jewel beautifies the person who wears it. The Buddha beautifies the world by causing beings to generate virtuous thoughts. The dharma beautifies the world as it is the actual method to attain enlightenment. The saṃgha beautifies the world by inspiring virtue in beings and as companions along the path.
5. The three jewels are 'supreme' [mchog tu gyur ba] since in this world nothing is superior to them. Similarly, jewels are considered supreme among worldly objects. The Buddha is supreme in this world because he has completely transcended the world ['jig rten las 'das pa]. The dharma is supreme as it is the perfect path to liberation and enlightenment; the saṃgha is supreme as it has embarked on that path.
6. The three jewels are 'unchanging' ['gyur ba med pa]; like jewels they are by nature without change. Unchanging means not falling under the power of impermanence. The Buddha has attained the unchanging wisdom. The dharma is unchanging as it teaches the unchanging Four Noble Truths. The saṃgha is unchanging since once saṃgha members have reached the level of exalted persons, they will unwaveringly progress to enlightenment.

The Tibetan translators tried to capture two of these six qualities when they coined the word 'könchok', 'supreme and rare' [dkon mchog] for the Sanskrit word 'ratna'. They thought that the Tibetan word 'rinchen', meaning jewels like rubies and emeralds, did not convey the full meaning well enough.

Why did they choose these two qualities from among the six? Because the cause [rgyu] for enlightenment is difficult to obtain. People have many negative thoughts. Positive thoughts, emotions and actions, which form the cause to embark upon the path of enlightenment, are rare. Even rarer is the actual attainment of enlightenment. As the Buddha is free from all defects and endowed with all qualities, he is supreme in this world. These two, rare and supreme, are the most outstanding of a jewel's six qualities. Therefore, the Tibetan translators selected a word that reflects the implied meaning rather than adhering strictly to a literal translation.

The sūtra teachings recognize only 'three jewels': the teacher [ston pa], the teaching [bstan pa], and the followers [slob pa]. More than three are not necessary. Practicing the path to enlightenment, one need rely only on the three jewels.

When paying respect to the three jewels one must understand what they are. According to the Mahāyāna teachings, Buddha, dharma and saṃgha are each endowed with eight qualities:

> Being endowed with eight qualities of the twofold benefits is the hallmark of the jewel of the Buddha.
> Being endowed with eight qualities of cessation and path is the hallmark of the sublime dharma.
> Being endowed with eight qualities of knowledge and liberation is the hallmark of the noble saṃgha.
>
> don gnyis yon tan brgyad ldan sangs rgyas dkon mchog gi mtshan nyid
> 'gog lam yon tan brgyad ldan dam pa'i chos kyi mtshan nyid
> rig grol yon tan brgyad ldan 'phags pa'i dge 'dun gyi mtshan nyid

These qualities will be explained in great detail in Khenpo Kunpal's commentary to the second chapter of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra.

Text sections 169-171:

Śāntideva furthermore pays respect to all who are worthy of veneration. This includes the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, the sons of Buddha's speech. In addition, he pays homage to any person who has a single quality greater than his own. In the same way, one should pay respect to any spiritual master, teacher, fellow monk or dharma friend who possesses a single quality in a greater degree than oneself, such as a monk who is *even one shadow cast* [grib ma sor gcig] senior in ordination age.

At the conclusion of the ordination ceremony for monks, one monk, called 'the time measurer' [dus bstan pa], has the task of measuring the time. He determines the exact time when the ordination vows are conferred upon each aspirant, the very moment the preceptor snaps his fingers. He records in the ordination certificate the minute, the hour, whether it is daytime or night-time, the date, whether it is in the first or second half of the month, the season and year of the ordination. Traditionally, the exact time was measured according to the shadow cast by a small, pyramidal wooden device called a 'shadow stick' [grib so].

A monk who was ordained on the same day, even one finger-width of a shadow cast earlier than another monk, will always be considered 'a senior monk' [bslab pa rgan pa], someone who has received the monk vows at an earlier stage [bslab sdom len snga pa'i grva pa] and hence should be respected by all those ordained after him.

Nevertheless, seniority is not the only type of ranking within the saṃgha. In addition to ranking according to seniority [dus kyi dbang du byed pa] is ranking according to wisdom [ye shes kyi dbang du byed pa]. The Buddha taught that the attainment of wisdom always supercedes seniority in ordination age when it comes to one's position

in the saṃgha. Even a Buddhist lay practitioner [dge bsnyen] who has realized wisdom is held in higher esteem than a fully ordained monk who has not yet realized wisdom.

Those who are helpful [phan 'dogs pa] refers to one's father and mother, spiritual friends and so forth.

There are various reasons to declare respect when beginning to compose a treatise: (1) in order to complete the composition of the treatise without any obstacles, (2) so that the author's followers truly trust in the authenticity of the treatise, develop faith, and are inspired to diligence, (3) so that the teachers and students will be able to successfully expound and study the treatise without any obstacles.

Śāntideva expresses his devotion to the three jewels with the *three gates* [sgo gsum], body, speech and mind. He respectfully offers prostrations with his body [lus gus pas sgo nas phyag 'tshal]; he respectfully supplicates with his voice [ngag gus pas sgo nas gsol ba 'debs]; and he respectfully recalls the special qualities of the three jewels in his mind [yid gus pas sgo nas khyad chos kyi yon tan dran pa].

For the blessings of the buddhas and bodhisattvas to enter your mind, you must open your mind to these supreme fields of merit. Realization will dawn only when the blessings of the buddhas and bodhisattvas have entered your mind. You should practice pure perception [dag snang] concerning your personal master and teacher, focusing only on his positive qualities.

The author's declaration of respect to the buddhas and bodhisattvas at the very beginning of the treatise ensures that everyone who reads the book will immediately recognize it as a Buddhist text.

Text section 172:

Nāgārjuna states that if an author declares respect to the Buddha when he begins to compose a treatise the composition will always yield good results. Declaring respect at the beginning of the treatise causes the readers to develop faith and devotion in the Buddha and in the treatise. If the author pays respect, the readers will naturally follow his example.

Text section 173:

The quote from the Lalita-vistara-sūtra[1469] links the declaration respect to the buddhas and bodhisattvas, the proclamation of the names of the buddhas [sangs rgyas kyi mtshan brjod pa], to the generation of immeasurable merit. The blessings of the buddhas and bodhisattvas will enter such a meritorious person's mind-stream, and he will accomplish whatever he wishes.

[1469] *Lalita-vistara-sūtra* [rgya cher rol pa'i mdo]

Before a master teaches, he first offers three prostrations to the seat or throne from which he will teach the dharma. This cuts through any possible pride that he might develop, and instead produces humility. There is always the danger that sitting upon a high throne and teaching the dharma to many people might lead a teacher to become proud.

Whenever my teacher, Khenpo Pentse, entered into the Śrī Siṃha Shedra hall to teach, right at the door he would prostrate himself three time to the throne, books and statues. Then he would ascend the throne where he remained standing while the monks offered three prostrations to him. After Khenpo Pentse had sat down, all the monks also sat. Apart from such teaching situations, Khenpo Pentse would refuse to accept prostrations from monks or lay people saying, "Don't prostrate to me. I am just an ordinary sentient being. Prostrate to the dharma books and statues."

The tradition of offering prostrations to the throne started with the Buddha when he taught the Prajñāpāramitā [sher phyin] for the first time. Buddha arranged his own teaching throne and prostrated to it before sitting down. Buddha did this to acknowledge the 'greatness of the teaching' [chos kyi che ba]. The Prajñāpāramitā teachings are very profound [shin tu zab pa] and difficult to realize [rtogs dka' ba]. From that time onward, teachers in the monasteries and shedras [bshad grva] of India and Tibet began prostrating to their thrones before they started teaching. The throne itself is not a sign of the greatness of the master, but rather symbolizes the greatness of the dharma.

Moreover, a teacher should always wash before he teaches. He should touch the scriptures only with clean hands. This is another gesture of respect to the dharma and to the scriptures. Once the teacher has ascended to the throne, the students must present three prostrations as a gesture of respect to the teacher who is the expounder of the dharma.

Text section 175:

Precept [sdom pa] is defined as 'that which safeguards against non-virtuous tendencies of body, speech and mind' [lus ngag yid gsum mi dge ba'i phyogs la bsdams]. The literal meaning of the term 'precept' is 'to bind' [sdom pa], 'to close' [kha sdom pa], or 'to close down all three gates of non-virtue' [mi dge ba'i sgo ba'i sgo gsum thams cad bsdams bzhag]. Therefore, 'taking precepts' safeguards against or causes one to refrain from all misdeeds [nyes pa'i phyogs thams cad bsdom bzhag pa].

A bodhisattva commits himself to three disciplines [tshul khrims gsum]: (1) the discipline of refraining from negative conduct, (2) the discipline of practicing virtuous dharmas and (3) the discipline of fulfilling the benefit of sentient beings.

(1) *The discipline of refraining from negative conduct* [nyes spyod sdom pa'i tshul khrims]: A bodhisattva avoids all ten unwholesome actions [mi dge ba bcu] as though they were poison and practices their opposites, the ten virtuous actions. A bodhisattva safeguards his body, speech and mind, maintaining the basic training [bslab gzhi] of the 'seven categories of the precepts of individual liberation' [so thar ris bdun kyi sdom pa].

The seven categories of the precepts of individual liberation [so thar ris bdun kyi sdom pa] are those of: (1) a fully ordained monk [dge slong; skr. bhikṣu]; (2) a fully ordained nun [dge slong ma; skr. bhikṣunī]; (3) a monk [dge tshul; skr. śrāmaṇera]; (4) a nun [dge tshul ma skr. śrāmaṇerikā]; (5) a male lay practitioner [dge bsnyen; skr. upāsaka]; (6) a female lay practitioner [dge bsnyen ma; skr. upāsikā] and (7) a probationary nun [dge slob ma; skr. śikṣāmāṇā].

A bodhisattva avoids any negative action such as the ten non-virtuous actions [mi dge ba bcu], the five crimes with immediate retribution [mtshams med pa lnga], the five secondary crimes with immediate retribution [nye ba'i mtshams med pa lnga], the five perverted means of sustenance [log pa'i 'tsho ba lnga], and others.

The ten non-virtuous actions [dge ba bcu] are: 1) taking life [srog gcod pa], 2) taking what is not given [ma byin par len pa], 3) sexual misconduct [log g.yem], 4) speaking lies [rdzun smra ba], 5) sowing discord [phra ma byed pa], 6) harsh words [tshig rtsub], 7) worthless chatter [ngag kyal], 8) covetousness [rnab sems], 9) wishing harm to others [gnod sems], and 10) wrong views [log lta].

The five crimes with immediate retribution [mtshams med pa lnga] are: killing one's father [pha gsod pa], killing one's mother [ma gsod pa], killing an arhat [dra bcom pa gsod pa], creating a split in the saṃgha [dge 'dun gyi dbyen byed pa], and malevolently causing a tathāgata to bleed [de bzhin gshegs pa'i sku la ngan sems kyis khrag 'byin pa]. Among these five creating a split in the saṃgha is considered the most severe misdeed.

The five secondary crimes with immediate retribution [nye ba'i mtshams med pa lnga] are: acting impurely with a female arhat [dgra bcom ma la 'dod log spyod pa], killing a bodhisattva [byang sems nges gnas gsod pa], killing a saṃgha member who is on the path of learning [slob pa'i dge 'dun gsod pa], stealing the sustenance of the saṃgha [dge 'dun gyi 'du sgo 'phrog pa], and destroying a stūpa [mchod rten bshig pa].

The eight perverse acts [log pa brgyad] are: 1. criticizing goodness [dkar phyogs la smad pa], 2. praising evil [nag phyogs la bstod pa], 3. interrupting the accumulation of merit of a virtuous person [dge ba can gyi tshogs bsags pa la bar du gcod cing tshogs bcag pa], 4. disturbing the mind of those who have devotion [dad pa can gyi thugs dkrugs pa], 5. giving up one's master [bla ma spangs], 6. giving up one's deity [lha spangs], 7. giving up one's vajra brothers and sisters [mched lcam spangs], and 8. desecrating a maṇḍala [dkyil 'khor gnyan po dral].

The five perverted ways of sustenance [log pa'i 'tsho ba lnga] are: 1) obtaining something through pretentiousness [tshul 'chos], 2) obtaining something through flattery [kha gsag], 3) obtaining something through hinting at it [gzhogs slong], 4) obtaining something through open theft [thob kyis 'jal ba], and 5) obtaining something through calculated generosity [rnyed pas rnyed pa 'tshol ba].

1) 'Pretentiousness' means trying to obtain food or donations from a sponsor by pretending to be something which one is not, or by pretending to have certain qualities which one does not have. 2) 'Flattery' means trying to obtain food or donations from a sponsor through speaking pleasant words that will delight the

sponsor. 3) 'Hinting' means trying to obtain something that belongs to someone else by praising it. For instance, praising someone else's watch with the expectation that it will be given. 4) 'Open theft' in this context means obtaining something that belongs to someone else by saying, "I need this," and simply snatching it from its owner. 5) 'Calculated generosity' means presenting a small gift to the sponsor in hope of obtaining a large donation in return.

(2) *The discipline of practicing virtuous dharmas* [dge ba chos sdud kyi tshul khrims]: While maintaining discipline of gathering merit by practicing any type of virtue, a bodhisattva studies and ponders the sublime teachings and practices the teachings which lead to enlightenment, such as the six transcendental perfections.

The six transcendental perfections [pha rol tu phyin pa drug] are: generosity [sbyin pa], discipline [tshul khrims], patience [bzod pa], diligence [brtson 'grus], concentration [bsam gtan], and wisdom-knowledge [shes rab].

(3) *The discipline of fulfilling the benefit of sentient beings* [sems can don byed kyi tshul khrims]: This refers to how a bodhisattva benefits sentient beings. A bodhisattva meets the needs of beings in an appropriate manner and works exclusively for the benefit of others [gzhan la phan gyi bya ba sgrub]. In general, *discipline* [tshul khrims] means maintaining a code of conduct which accords with the nature of reality [dgnos po gnas lugs dang mthun pa'i de khrims tshul khrims].

Śāntideva composed the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra by consolidating the teachings and scriptures of the Buddha. He did not change or add anything to the teachings but composed this text in exact accordance with the Buddha's teachings. Hence, it says without *pretence* [pho tshod / ham pa] or *idiosyncratic fabrication* [rang bzo].

Text section 176:

Any treatise which is *in accordance with the scriptures* [lung bzhin du] is thereby trustworthy. One knows immediately that this text is based on the scriptures and quotes the direct words of the Buddha. With these few words Śāntideva has actually made a great commitment to rely only on the words of the Buddha, the highest authority for a Buddhist. The Pramāṇavārttika[1470] says:

> The scriptures are words one can trust.
> Since (the Buddha) is free from defects,
> He lacks the basis for speaking lies.
> Therefore, the scriptures should be understood to be (words) free of defects.

The Tibetan word 'lung' [lung] has the connotation of 'a handle', 'something the hand can grasp' [yu ba / a lung / lag pas bzung sa]. In the Buddhist context, the word 'lung' is

1470 *tshad ma rnam 'grel.*

'a word worthy of trust' [yid ches 'os pa'i tshig]. This does not refer to ordinary words, since they might lead to disappointment. 'Lung' are words in which one can ultimately trust [mthar thug yid ches byed sa'i tshig]. We have translated the term here as *scripture*, 'scriptural authority', or 'teaching' [lung]. The direct words of the Buddha [bka'] are written down in the scriptures [lung / gsung rab].

There are words that have defects [nyes pa yod pa'i tshig] and words that are free from defects [nyes pa med pa'i tshig]. However, since the Buddha himself is free from any defects [nyes pa zad pa], he lacks the basis for lies [rdzun gyi tshig]. Buddha's body, speech and mind have not the slightest defect. All defects have ceased to exist. Therefore, there is no basis within the Buddha for lying, for saying what is not true [rdzun gyi tshig rgyu med pa'i phyir]. For this reason one should consider the scriptures [lung] and the Buddha's teachings [lung] as words free from any defects. Since the Buddha himself is flawless, his teachings are equally flawless [sangs rgyas kyi bka' dri ma med pa].

Without defects [nyed pa zad pa] means 'without error' [nor ba med pa]. Buddha is free from any ego-clinging [bdag 'dzin] and, therefore, free from all errors and defects; he has no basis for speaking what is not true. All words uttered within a mind frame of anger, attachment, jealousy, pride, desire and so forth are words that are imbued with defects and harm [nyes pa can gyi tshig]. Therefore, before one accepts the authority of any written teaching, one should carefully examine whether the teacher who wrote these words is truly free from mind poisons. In any spiritual system, check carefully the one who taught the rules, laws and regulations to live by. Analyze who is deciding what is considered to be good or bad. If a teacher is tainted by defects, his teachings cannot be flawless.

Text sections 177-178:

The Buddha is utterly free from delusion ['khrul pa] and from fear ['jigs skrag med pa]. People tell lies based on delusion and fear. If someone is free from ignorance, desire, anger, jealousy and stinginess, then that person is not able to tell lies, even if he wants to.

The 'sublime dharma' [dam pa' chos] which the Buddha held in the *endless knot* [dpal gyi be'u] within his heart refers to the 'dharmakāya of realization' [rtogs pa chos sku]. The endless knot in his heart is simply a poetic expression for the Buddha's mind. His throat is compared to an overflowing vase, his tongue to a lotus, and his teeth to conch shells. His spoken teachings are known as the 'dharmakāya of the doctrine' [bstan pa chos sku].

The sublime dharma is comprised of the 'words' or 'pronouncements' of the Buddha [bka'] and treatises [bstan bcos] composed by the Buddha's followers. One can identify different kinds of pronouncements of the Buddha [sangs rgyas kyi bka' gsum].

1) 'The pronouncements given orally by the Buddha' [zhal nas gsungs pa'i bka'] are considered the most important and were all eloquently proclaimed [legs par gsungs ba]

by the Buddha himself [ston pa dngos kyi zhal nas gsungs pa]. This refers to sūtras such as the Prajñāpāramitā-sañcaya-gāthā [mdo sdud pa / sher phyin sdud pa], the Mañjuśrī-nāma-saṃgīti ['jam dpal mtshan brjod], and others.

2) Moreover, 'the pronouncements given through blessings' [byin gyis brlabs pa'i bka'] are teachings not proclaimed by the Buddha in person [ston pa dngos kyi zhal nas gsung ba ma yin par] but by his great followers like the arhats and the bodhisattvas. When these great beings teach the dharma, the blessings of the Buddha come through in their teachings. The Daśabhumika-sūtra [sa bcu pa'i mdo] was taught through the blessings of the Buddha's body [sku] by Vajragarbha [rdo rje snying po] and Vimukticandra [rnam grol zla ba] after the Buddha had placed his hand on the crown of their heads.

The Aṣṭa-sāhasrikā-prajñā-pāramitā [brgyad stong pa] was taught through the blessings of the Buddha's speech [gsung] by Subhūti [rab 'byor] after the Buddha had encouraged him with a statement. The Bhagavatī-prajñā-pāramitā-hṛdaya [sher snying / shes rab snying po] was taught through the blessings of the Buddha's mind [thugs] in a dialogue between Śāriputra [śā ri' bu] and Avalokiteśvara [spyan ras gzigs], while the Buddha remained in samadhi.

3) Furthermore, 'the pronouncements given by mandate' [rjes su gnang ba'i bka'] are teachings given by persons who have been authorized by the Buddha or by their masters to teach the dharma to others. This refers to all teachings of the Buddha transmitted through the compilers of the teachings [bka' bsdu ba po], such as Ānanda [kun dga' bo], Mahākāśyapa ['od srung chen po] and others. This type of teachings begins with the phrase, "Thus have I heard, at one time…" ['di skad bdag gis thos pa dus gcig na].[1471]

All pronouncements of the Buddha are included within the Kangyur, which has preserved the entire tripiṭaka [sde sndo gsum]. The Kangyur includes all sūtras [mdo] and tantras [rgyud] since they are both considered pronouncements of the Buddha. The three promulgations of the dharma [chos 'khor rnam gsum] as well as the fourth promulgation, the 'promulgation of the Secret Mantra' [gsang sngags kyi chos 'khor], are incoporated within the Kangyur. The Tangyur contains all treatises [bstan bcos].

Text section 179:

The 'treatises' [bstan bcos] are 'commentaries' [dgongs 'grel], texts which elucidate these pronouncements. Khenpo Kunpal enumerates four types of treatises. (1) *A treatise which rectifies sequential disorder* ['khrugs pa go rims su bsdeb pa'i bstan bcos] systematizes and structures a vast text when the order and systematic treatment of the teaching are not obvious. (2) *A treatise which elucidates difficult points* [gab pa 'byin pa'i bstan bcos] explains difficult subjects, passages and words. (3) *A treatise which gathers what has been*

1471 For further details on the three pronouncements see *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, pages 74-76.

dispersed ['thor ba sdud pa'i bstan bcos] compiles knowledge of a particular subject from many scriptures, consolidating it into one book. (4) *A treatise for the practice of meditation* [sgrub pa nyams len giy bstan bcos] is written for practitioners. The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is a treatise which gathers what has been dispersed as well as a treatise meant for the practice of meditation.

Actually, the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra combines the three kinds of genuine treatises [bstan bcos yang dag gsum] in one text. It is a treatise which is meaningful [don dang ldan pa'i bstan bcos], a treatise that leads to the overcoming of suffering [sdug bsngal spong ba'i bstan bcos], and a treatise concerned with the application of practice [sgrub pa lhur len pa'i bstan bcos].

The word *treatise* [bstan bcos] translates the Sanskrit word 'śāstra', which is derived from 'śasti', meaning to overcome or to transform ['chos], and from 'trāyate', meaning to protect [skyob]. A true Buddhist treatise must possess the two qualities of 'overcoming' and 'protecting'. Thus, a treatise teaches how to overcome the five afflictions of attachment, aversion, ignorance, arrogance and jealousy, and thus protects one from the causes for taking rebirth in the three lower realms. Therefore, the Vyākhyā-yukti [rnam bshad rigs pa] says:

> That which overcomes the enemy of afflictions without exception
> And affords protection from rebirth in the (three) lower realms
> Is a treatise, for it has the qualities of overcoming and protecting.
> Treatises that have both these (qualities) do not exist in other traditions.

> nyon mong dgra rnams ma lus 'chos pa dang
> ngan 'gro'i srid las skyob ba gang yin pa
> 'chos skyob yon tan phyir na bstan bcos te
> gnyis po 'di dag gzhan gyi lugs la med

Only treatises which are exclusively based on the direct words of the Buddha [bka'] are 'ultimate' treatises. Only they are endowed with the qualities of overcoming and protecting. Therefore, studying and practicing them diligently is very meaningful.

By studying a treatise such as the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra one can reach a level of knowledge about the dharma that will remedy blind faith. A practitioner of the dharma should eventually gain the faith of conviction, an unshakeable certainty [nges shes] in the dharma. A Buddhist practitioner should know what Buddha, dharma and saṃgha really are. Such a practitioner should really understand how to practice bodhicitta and the six transcendental perfections. Intellectual understanding [go ba] of the teachings must lead to direct experience [nyams myong] of the teachings. Finally, the experience must lead to the realization [rtogs pa] of the teachings. As one reads, studies and practices the dharma more, one's wrong views, misunderstandings and doubts should to that extent be dispelled, and certainty about the dharma should dawn in one's mind.

Text section 181:

Nāgārjuna's quote from the Prajñā-daṇḍa is made to show the nature of Śāntideva's pledge to compose this treatise. Sublime beings never waver in their promises. Such a promise or pledge is like taking on a precept. Through fulfilling the pledge of composing a treatise, the author gathers tremendous merit, much more than if he had simply written the text without making any pledge. A pledge [dam bca' ba], precept [sdom pa], or discipline [tshul khrims], when taken on, immeasurably increases the merit in any virtuous action.

Text section 182:

The author of a treatise must cast away his pride because if one writes out of a prideful motivation, such a book will bring no benefit to sentient beings. Śāntideva, although highly realized and learned, casts away pride by stating that in the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra he teaches nothing that the buddhas and bodhisattvas did not teach before. He also states that he is not learned in prosody and poetry.

Again Khenpo Kunpal quotes the Indian scholar *Vibhūticandra*'s metrical prologue to his commentary on the Bodhicaryāvatāra:[1472]

> In the (history of) the Victor's doctrine
> Many great beings and persons have appeared,
> But I have found none
> Whose experience and realization compare with Śāntideva's.

Thus, Vibhūticandra states that many *great masters* [bdag nyid chen po] and great *persons* [skyes bu chen po] appeared in the history of Indian Buddhism, but none could compare with Śāntideva in meditation experience and realization. Śāntideva was indeed a very great master, but he, nonetheless, assumes a position of humility, casting away his pride at the beginning of composing this treatise. While he states that he has no skills in poetry, in fact, the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is an outstanding poetic masterpiece.

Text section 183:

Prosody [deb sbyor] is one of the five lesser sciences. [1473] These are: poetics [snyan ngag], synonymics [mgnon brjod], prosody [sdeb sbyor], drama [zlos gar] and astrology [skar

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[1472] See *vibhūti dgongs 'grel*, page 236, folio 229b.

[1473] For further information on the five lesser sciences [rig gnas chung ba lnga] see *Nyingma School of Tibetan Buddhism*, pages 103-107.

rtsis]. The most famous treatise on prosody, the Chando-ratnākara,[1474] was written by the Indian master Śāntipa.

The Indian master of poetry *Kṣemendra*[1475] composed the famous Kalpalatā,[1476] containing one hundred and eight stories on Buddha's previous lives written in a lovely poetical style.

The Indian master *Śūra*,[1477] a disciple of Āryadeva, composed a text on Buddha's previous life stories called Jātakamālā in 34 Sections.[1478]

Text sections 184-185:

Since Śāntideva states he has neither skill in meaning nor in words, one might object, "If you possess so little skill, why did you compose this treatise?" Anticipating this objection, Śāntideva says he only wrote the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra to cultivate the motivation of bodhicitta and the application of the six transcendental perfections. Teaching the dharma to others benefits not only the listeners but also one's own mind. In addition, debating the dharma and composing a treatise is extremely beneficial for one's own mind as well as for the minds of others.

Scholars actually have three occupations [mkhas pa'i las gsum]: to teach, to debate with other scholars, and to write treatises and commentaries. Of these, writing is considered the most important. The Indian master Candragomin wrote:

> Therefore, among the three activities of scholars,
> Teaching and debating may be uncertain (in nature),
> However, there can be no delusion (permitted) in composition.

Teaching and debating about the dharma might still allow for uncertainties [ma nges pa srid], since even scholars are sometimes mistaken [nor srid phyir] or deluded ['khrul pa srid phyir]. However, when teaching or debating, they have the opportunity to correct their mistakes. When composing a treatise or commentary on the other hand, there is no room for uncertainty or delusion [mi 'khrul pa] regarding the meaning. The author either produces an accurate or an inaccurate commentary; he either understands or he does not. Moreover, writing treatises and compositions is considered a far greater contribution to furthering the spread of the dharma than is teaching or debating.

Text section 186:

1474 *Chando-ratnākara* [deb sbyor rin chen 'byung gnas].

1475 Kṣemendra [dge ba'i dbang po].

1476 *Kalpalatā* [dpag bsam 'khri shing].

1477 Master *Śūra* [slob dpon dpa' bo].

1478 See *Jātakamālā in 34 Sections* [skyes rabs so bzhi pa] and *Garland of Birth-Stories*.

One may then wonder, "Why cast away pride?" A treatise written out of arrogance and pride will not benefit beings at all. Candrakirti [zla ba grags pa] is said to have felt proud about a treatise he wrote on grammar; because of his pride in his writing skills, this particular treatise benefited only a few people. Therefore, even if one is very learned and knowledgeable, one should always assume a humble position and thus cast away pride. Śāntideva's humility sets an example for future scholars.

Text section 187:

Again one might object, "Since you have written this text for your own benefit [khyed rang gis khyed rang la phan phyir bris na], you should be content just to know it for yourself. You seem to have written this treatise for no reason."

Text sections 188-189:

Anticipating these doubts, Śāntideva sets forth his reasons for composing this text. He hopes the composition will increase both his faith and cultivation of virtue and inspire others as well. *Virtue* or 'that which is wholesome' [dge ba] is defined here as the motivation of bodhicitta and the conduct of the six transcendental perfections. Khenpo Kunpal notes three types of faith [dad pa rnam pa gsum]: 1) the faith of amazement [dang ba'i dad pa], 2) the faith of inspiration ['dod pa'i dad pa], and 3) the faith of conviction [yid ches kyi dad pa].

1) The *faith of amazement* consists of being amazed by the qualities of the three jewels [dkon mchog sogs kyi yon tan la dang ba'i dad pa]. This faith means to be delighted about the qualities of the three jewels [dkon mchog gsum gyi yon tan la sems dga' ba].

2) The *faith of inspiration* is a faith inspired to pursue the qualities that can be attained [thob bya'i yon tan sogs la don gnyer gyi 'dod pa'i dad pa]. It is the wish to pursue and to acquire their qualities.

3) The *faith of conviction* is a faith that is confident and convinced about the law of cause and effect [las 'bras la yid ches pa'i dad pa]. This faith means to have gained confidence and certainty in the qualities of the Buddha, dharma and saṃgha. This faith is also called 'the faith of knowing the reasons' [rgyu mtshan shes pa'i dad pa].

In another listing, four kinds of faith [dad pa rnam pa bzhi] are mentioned: 1) the faith of amazement [dang ba'i dad pa], 2) the faith of inspiration ['dod pa'i dad pa], 3) the faith of certainty [yid ches kyi dad pa], and 4) irreversible faith [phyir mi ldog pa'i dad pa]. Irresversible faith only comes about through the practice of meditation.[1479]

1479 Irreversible faith is also called 'indestructable faith' [mi phrogs pa'i dad pa] or 'indivisible faith' [mi phyed pa'i dad pa]. Indivisible here means that one can never loose it or be separated from it. Even at the cost of one's life one will never stray from that kind of faith.

The term *to cultivate* [bsgom, skr. bhāvanā] can also be translated as 'to meditate', or 'to contemplate'. In Khenpo Kunpal's commentary, it means 'to familiarize oneself with' or 'to grow accustomed to' [goms pa].

To cultivate [bsgom] suggests meanings such as becoming 'accustomed to', 'familiar with' [goms], or 'acquainted with' ['dris] the continuous maintenance of concentration [dmigs pa], having the mind repeatedly focus on virtuous thoughts [sems dge ba'i dmigs pa]. This term is used in phrases like 'cultivating faith' [dad pa sgom pa] or 'cultivating compassion' [snying rje sgom pa].

Since 'to cultivate', 'to meditate' [sgom pa], and 'to become familiar with' [goms pa] have the same basic meaning, Tibetan translators use 'path of meditation', 'path of cultivation' [sgom pa'i lam], or 'path of habituation' [goms pa'i lam] to translate the Sanskrit term 'bhāvanāmarga'.

You might ask why you should familiarize or accustom your mind to virtuous thoughts. The answer is that our minds have not been masters of themselves [rang dbang] since time without beginning. Rather, they are always dwelling in a state of dependency [gzhan dbang]. Our minds are constantly chasing after afflictions [nyon mongs, skr. kleśa], which lead to the development of all sorts of defects and mistakes [nyes skyon]. 'Cultivation' or 'meditation' means bringing such a mind under your own power of mastery [rang dbang] and directing it toward whatever virtuous thoughts you wish.

Writing a treatise such as the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, or expounding the text to others, leads to an increase in the three kinds of faith because you are then focusing your attention on the buddha dharma, which is virtuous. On the other hand, if you place your attention on something negative, your unwholesome tendencies, such as aggression, will increase.

A mere intellectual understanding of the words of this treatise will not bring forth genuine bodhicitta and thus will not lead to a decrease in afflictions. Superficial study [thos pa tsam] is not enough. Without intensive study, whatever a student learns will be easily forgotten. Topics like the preciousness of human existence and the benefits of bodhicitta must be repeatedly and constantly kept in mind until heartfelt conviction arises. Only through constant familiarization with the dharma will faith and virtue increase. When familiarization is perfected [goms pa mthar phyin na], the true meaning of bodhicitta will clearly manifest [don gsal bar mngon sum du 'gyur ba]. Mingle your mind with this treatise.

Faith [dad pa] and devotion [mos gus] are mental acts [sems kyi mos pa], while respect [gus pa] refers more to body and speech [lus ngag gi gus pa]. Faith and devotion purify your mind. Faith in itself is a pure thought. A mind infused with faith and devotion is a pure mind. Faith, devotion and a virtuous mindset are the root of all healing powers. A virtuous mind is the source of all happiness. Virtue [dge ba] refers to positive action in body, speech and mind. If you live your life according to the Buddhist teachings on virtue, you will always feel bliss in your mind and physical body. Virtue is also the key

to social harmony. What follows are the most basic instructions on virtue and how to develop a virtuous mind [dge ba'i sems].

Study the scriptures of the Buddha, rely on a spiritual friend [dge ba'i bshes gnyen], and associate yourself with noble friends [grogs bzang po]. Do not inflict any harm on others, and practice the ten virtuous actions.

Avoid engaging in any of the ten non-virtuous actions [mi dge ba bcu]: taking life [srog gcod pa], taking what is not given [ma byin par len pa], sexual misconduct [log g.yem], speaking lies [rdzun smra ba], sowing discord [phra ma byed pa], harsh words [tshig rtsub], worthless chatter [ngag kyal], covetousness [rnab sems], wishing harm to others [gnod sems], and wrong views [log lta].

Avoiding taking life means not to kill any sentient being. Avoiding taking what is not given means not to steal. Avoiding sexual misconduct means not to take a partner who is in a relationship with someone else. Avoiding speaking lies means not to twist people's minds through untruthful statements. Avoiding sowing discord means not to drive people apart through vicious talk. Instead, bring people together through harmonious and friendly ways of talking. Avoiding speaking harsh words means not to speak in an unkind way to others. Always use soft and gentle language.

Avoiding worthless chatter means to not waste your time talking nonsense. Avoiding covetousness means taming the desire to obtain and possess everything you see. Learn to be content [chog shes] with whatever material goods you have. Avoiding wishing harm to others is a most important point. You should always wish good things for other people. Wish everyone well, even people who have caused you harm.

Finally, avoid wrong views. Do not hold the wrong view that everything will come to an end with your death. Trust in karma, the law of cause and effect. Know that all your thoughts and emotions, words and actions have consequences. Understand that good actions lead to good results and bad actions to bad results. Know that your mind [sems] will take rebirth repeatedly until you achieve enlightenment. The correct universal view ['jig rten yang dag pa'i lta ba] means to believe in karma [las 'bras la yid ches pa] and to avoid the ten negative actions.

Tulku Urgyen taught that practitioners should tame their harmful intentions [gnod sems] by applying the sūtra teaching on 'training in goodness in four ways' [dge sbyong chos bzhi]:

> Although accused, do not respond with accusation.
> Although attacked, do not respond with aggression.
> Although beaten, do not strike back.
> Although exposed, do not respond by exposing others.

> gshe yang slar mi gshe ba dang
> khros kyang slar mi khro ba
> brdegs kyang slar mi rdeg pa
> mtshang brus kyang slar mi 'bru ba'o

You might be falsely blamed for something terrible. You might be accused of something bad you did not do or say. A yogin does not respond to accusation by saying, “I didn’t do it.” He does not retaliate by accusing others. When anger or aggression comes at him, he never answers with aggression. However harsh the words may be, however bold the aggressor, the yogin does not become upset. Even if physically attacked and beaten, a yogin will never hit back; he will sit where he is, taking the beating silently. As long as the yogin is on the path, he is not free from defects. So, when someone exposes his faults, he does not become upset or defensive. He might say, “What you observe is true. I am at fault.”

If you apply these points, you will have no enemies; you will not be a target for aggression. Whatever bad things might be said or done to you will cause no harm. As you do not respond to negativity, people will tire of trying to pick fights with you. Train yourself and try to accomplish this much patience. If you stick to these points, you may be called a practitioner. Give the gain to others and keep the loss. Allow others to be right, even if it makes you wrong. This is how Tulku Urgyen advised his students.

Living according to these principles will make your entire being content and happy. It does not matter whether you are rich or poor, famous or unknown. The very basis of a happy life is to live according to the discipline of avoiding negative actions [mi dge ba bcu spong ba’i tshul khrims]. It does not matter whether or not you are a Buddhist. This is the very basis for happiness.

Students of Buddhism need to know one very important point. If you want to acquire knowledge [shes rab] and wisdom [ye shes], you must first become a proper vesssel, capable of holding and absorbing this kind of knowledge. The vessel [snod] is discipline [tshul khrims]. The minimum discipline required is the discipline of avoiding the ten negative actions [mi dge ba bcu spong ba’i tshul khrims]. Such a vessel of discipline [tshul khrims] will be able to hold knowledge [shes rab] and wisdom, leading to samadhi [ting nge ’dzin].

Discipline means making a commitment or pledge [dam bca’ ba]. You must pledge to live by the ten virtuous actions. Only then are you practicing discipline. The thought, “I will live by the ten virtuous actions and avoid the ten non-virtuous actions even at the cost of my life” generates inconceivable merit. Remind yourself of this pledge a few times every day. Your dharma study will then be successful. What you actually aspire to is a complete transformation of your entire being.

Text section 190:

To live straightforward [gzu bor gnas pa] in the conduct of the bodhisattvas means ’to live honestly’ [drang por gnas pa].

Text sections 191-192:

Some people who are overly timid may think, "I cannot do this. It's all too difficult for me. I simply don't have the confidence necessary to practice like that." Such a timid attitude will prevent you from practicing the dharma, and, therefore, virtuous qualities will never arise. An overly timid mind is a real obstacle for practicing the dharma. Dharma students must develop an uplifted [gzengs bstod pa] and joyous state of mind [sems spro ba], a mind that is enthusiastic and inspired. When two countries are on the brink of war, the generals like to fire up their soldiers with speeches, music and marches. Through that the soldiers develop courage [dpa' bskyed]. That is what is meant by 'uplifting one's mind' [gzengs bstod pa].

The Pitāputra-samāgamana-sūtra[1480] recounts the story of how the Buddha established his father, King Śuddhodana [zas gtsang ma], in the dharma.[1481]

Khenpo Chöga recounted this story in the following way: Because Śuddhodana was a king and also the Buddha's father, he was a very proud person. He thought, "Gautama is my son. I will not prostrate to him." As he was so swollen with pride, he could never receive teachings from the Buddha.

One day, while the Buddha was teaching at a certain place, King Śuddhodana went to see what was going on. As he approached, he saw the 'four great guardian kings' [rgyal chen sde bzhi] protecting the area. The four great guardian kings told King Śuddhodana, "Today, the Buddha will teach the dharma to the 'thirty-three gods' [lha sum cu rtsa gsum] as well as to us four great guardian kings. Human beings are not allowed to join the teachings."

King Śuddhodana thought, "I, the king, pay respect to the 'the thirty-three gods'. Now the gods are receiving teachings from my son, the Buddha." He began to see how very arrogant his attitude had been. Humbled in this way, he finally was able to prostrate to the Buddha, and so the Buddha established him in the dharma.

Text section 193:

The four prerequisites [rgyu bzhi po] of declaring respect [mchod par brjod pa], pledging to compose [rtsom par dam bca' ba], casting away pride [khengs pa skyung ba], and generating joy [spro ba bskyed pa] are not only needed for composing treatises but are also required for whatever task one may undertake, be it teaching, studying, meditating, building a temple and so forth.

Before you set out on any undertaking, you should first offer prostrations and supplicate the buddhas and lineage masters in order to receive their blessings. This will remove all obstacles for your project and is especially important when practicing meditation. Without supplicating the masters, you will not receive their blessings, and your meditation will not lead to realization. This is a crucial point. Without heartfelt

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1480 *yab sras mjal ba'i mdo*.

1481 See also *rtogs brjod rtsa 'grel*, story 23, yab dang sras mjal ba'i rtogs pa brjod pa, pages 119-126 and pages 499-503.

devotion, the blessings of the lineage will not descend, and realization will not dawn without the blessings of the lineage.

The second step for any undertaking is to give rise to the firm resolve to see your project through to completion. Such resolve is also indispensable for meditation. At the beginning of each session one should generate the resolution to be non-distracted for the entire session.

Next, you must overcome pride and arrogance without overcompensating by becoming timid. As long as you consider yourself superior to others, you cannot appreciate other people's qualities, and, therefore, you cannot learn from them. Meditators who think their practice is really fantastic have already fallen under the influence of Māra. A practitioner should have confidence in his practice but without a trace of arrogance and haughtiness. True confidence leads to the assurance of charisma [spobs pa].

A practitioner needs to respect himself or herself. Someone who rejoices in his own qualities and in the work he does will naturally develop respect toward himself. A practitioner who has respect toward his own innate goodness and in the goodness of his dharma practice will naturally gain the respect of others.

It is a sign of a genuine practitioner to be peaceful [zhi ba], tame ['dul ba], and relaxed [glod po]. Such a practitioner is in accord with the true nature of his mind. Being proud and arrogant means being not in accord with one's true natrue. A genuine practitioner is humble as he has nothing to defend. Being humble does not mean to be meek or fearful. Being meek and frightened is based on fear. To trust and rejoice in one's own qualities and innate goodness is called confidence [yid ches] or certainty [gdeng tshad]. This should never be confused with pride or arrogance.

A practitioner should always rejoice in his buddha nature [bde gshegs snying po], the fact that he is primordially endowed with all the infinite qulities of the Buddha. This is called to 'generate joy in one's basis' [gzhi], in one's buddha nature. When practicing the path of dharma, the pracitioner should generate joy in his own dharma practice. He should practice with a joyous mind, knowing that he is doing the right thing. That is called to 'generate joy in the path' [lam].

These four prerequisites [rgyu bzhi po] of 1) declaring respect [mchod par brjod pa], 2) pledging to compose [rtsom par dam bca' ba], 3) casting away pride [khengs pa skyung ba], and 4) generating joy [spro ba bskyed pa] can be applied to any project or work but should be practiced particularly when studying, contemplating and meditating.

Text section 194:

The four interrelated aspects such as the purpose and so forth [dgos sogs chos bzhi] are also called 'the fourfold interrelated purposes' [dgos 'brel bzhi / dgos 'brel yan lag bzhi]. When these four interrelated aspects are present, one will enter into the study of a treatise, since the treatise promises to be meaningful. The aspects are: 1) the topic [brjod bya], 2)

the purpose [dgos pa], 3) the ultimate purpose [nying dgos], and 4) the relation between them ['brel ba]. The first stanza of the first chapter demonstrates these four aspects:

> To the sugatas, who are endowed with the dharmakāya, together with their sons, and
> To all who are worthy of veneration, I respectfully pay homage. That done,
> In accordance with the scriptures, I will briefly explain
> Entering into the precepts of the sons of the sugatas.

1) The third line in the first stanza in Tibetan indicates the topic of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra: "Entering into the precepts of the sons of the sugatas" [bde gshegs sras kyi sdom la 'jug pa ni]. This line belongs to the section known as 'pledging to compose' the text [rtsom par dam bca' ba], the second of the four prerequisites [rgyu bzhi]. By stating the topic of the treatise, the author tells the reader what the text is about.

2) The overall purpose of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is laid out in the following line from the first stanza: "In accordance with the scriptures, I will briefly explain …." [lung bzhin mdor bsdus par bya]. This line also belongs to the section on 'pledging to compose' the text.

The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is a treatise which gathers what has been dispersed ['thos ba sdud pa'i bstan bcos] as well as being a treatise for the practice of meditation [sgrub pa nyams len gyi bcos]. Therefore, it will be meaningful and beneficial to anyone who reads it. This is the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra's real purpose, to condense all the teachings of the Buddha into one single treatise.

3) The ultimate purpose [nying dgos / mthar thug gi dgos pa] of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is spelled out by this line from the first stanza: "The sugatas, who are endowed with the dharmakāya, together with their sons…" [bde gshegs chos kyi sku mnga' ba sras bcas]. The ultimate purpose is to achieve the level of the Sugata, 'the one gone to bliss', who is endowed with the dharmakāya. This line belongs to the section called 'declaration of respect' [mchod par mchod pa], the first of the four prerequisites. Through the practice of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra one will be able to achieve the level of the sugatas, endowed with the dharmakāya. This ultimate purpose reveals the goal to which the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra leads.

4) The relation between these ['brel ba]: The latter aspects cannot exist without the former. First, you state the topic of the text; next, you state its purpose. Finally, you indicate where it is leading, the ultimate purpose. Lacking a topic, whatever you produce will not be meaningful to read. Without something meaningful to study and learn, you cannot reach the ultimate fruition, the dharmakāya. The interdependent relation of the three previous aspects is only implied [shugs nyid kyis] in the root text. It is not explicitly stated as the relationship is obvious.

In this way, the latter aspects are dependent on the former. If you do not understand the conduct of the bodhisattvas, you cannot understand the vast teachings of the Buddha, and without the Buddha's teachings you cannot reach enlightenment.

Text section 195:

These four aspects enable the reader to approach the treatise with trust [gzhan dag yid ches pa] and, moreover, with an *inquisitiveness that searches for meaning* [don 'gyur gyi the tshom].

One can approach a treatise fearing that it might be insignificant or with an inquisitveness into its possible significance. The first is fear concerning its insignificance [don mi 'gyur gyi dogs pa], when one thinks, "This treatise probably lacks a topic, a purpose, an ultimate purpose and a relation between these." The latter is the inquisitiveness concerning its significance [don 'gyur gyi the tshom], when one thinks, "This treatise probably has a topic, a purpose, an ultimate purpose and a relation between these."

In other words, you could think, "I wonder if reading this text might really be meaningful and beneficial for me. Maybe I will find some answers to my personal questions in this text." You should have an open and critical frame of mind, one searching for meaning. Inquisitiveness that seaches for meaning cuts through doubts [the tshom chod] and leads to a state free from any doubts. The Buddha always invited everyone to scrutinize his teachings. Only through addressing one's problems and analyzing them will one gain insight. The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra teaches the methods for doing exactly that.

In this way, the four aspects prevent people from entertaining wrong ideas [gzhan gyi log rtog bzlog pa], such as thinking, "The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra might be just a useless treatise [dgos med gyi bstan bcos], like some treatise on the dentistry of crows [bya rog so brtags kyi bstan bcos]." And finally, these four aspects enhance the beauty of the text [gzhung mdzes par byed pa].

An intelligent person will immediately know if a treatise is endowed with these four aspects. If a treatise should lack them, the reader will recognize it as useless and not even bother to continue reading.

Text sections 196-197:

This aspiration summarizes [phyogs bsdoms kyi tshig / bsdus tshig] the entire Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra has ten chapters in 913 stanzas. The ten chapters are structured according to four main classifications [rtsa'i sa bcad]:

Three chapters that give rise to the precious bodhicitta in those in whom it has not yet arisen[1482] (chap. 1, 2, 3):

[1482] byang chub kyi sems rin po che ma skyes pa bskyed par byed pa'i le'u [172-315]

1. Chapter one, explaining the benefits of bodhicitta[1483] (36 stanzas)
2. Chapter two, confessing negativities[1484] (65 stanzas)
3. Chapter three, thorough adoption of bodhicitta[1485] (33.5 stanzas)

Three chapters that prevent the decrease (of the precious bodhicitta) where it has arisen[1486] (chap. 4, 5, 6):

4. Chapter four, heedfulness[1487] (48 stanzas)
5. Chapter five, introspection[1488] (109 stanzas)
6. Chapter six, patience[1489] (134 stanzas)

Three chapters that not only prevent the decrease (of the precious bodhicitta) but cause it to ever increase more and more[1490] (chap. 7, 8, 9):

7. Chapter seven, diligence[1491] (76 stanzas)
8. Chapter eight, meditation[1492] (187 stanzas)
9. Chapter nine, transcendental knowledge[1493] (167 stanzas)

A single chapter concerning the dedication of the results that have thus been developed for the benefit of others[1494] (chap. 10):

10. Chapter ten, Dedication[1495] (57.5 stanzas).

Following this format of structuring the whole Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, the first three chapters deal with arousing bodhicitta. The second three chapters deal with how to sustain bodhicitta and prevent it from being lost or diminished. The third three chapters deal with methods for increasing bodhicitta. The tenth chapter deals with the subject of dedication. You dedicate the benefits of bodhicitta which you have aroused, sustained and increased through the teachings of the previous nine chapters.

1483 byang chub sems kyi phan yon bshad pa zhes bya ba ste le'u dang po [137-204]

1484 sdig pa bshags pa'i le'u ste gnyis pa [205-287]

1485 byang chub sems yongs su gzung ba zhes bya ba ste le'u gsum pa [288-315]

1486 byang chub kyi sems rin po che skyes pa mi nyams par byed pa'i le'u gsum [316-480]

1487 bag yod bstan pa zhes bya ba ste le'u bzhi pa [316-355]

1488 shes bzhin bsrung bar bya pa ste le'u lnga pa [356-414]

1489 bzod pa bstan pa zhes bya pa ste le'u drug pa [415-479]

1490 byang chub kyi sems rin po che mi nyams par gong du spel ba'i le'u gsum [480-738]

1491 brtson 'grus bstan pa zhes bya ba ste le'u bdun pa [480-520]

1492 bsam gtan bstan pa zhes bya ba ste le'u brgyad pa [521-617]

1493 shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa'i le'u ste dgu pa [618-738]

1494 de ltar spel ba'i 'bras bu gzhan don du bngo ba'i le'u gcig [739-807]

1495 bsngo ba zhes bya ba'i le'u ste bcu pa [739-807]

Looking carefully at Khenpo Kunpal's table of contents you will find all the major sections and sub-sections of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. If you apply these various headings to the root text, you will have already gained a great deal of insight into the meaning and interpretation of the text.

The first chapter of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra explains the *benefits* [phan yon] or qualities [yon tan] of bodhicitta. The word *benefits* [phan yon] suggests 'helpful qualities' [phan 'dogs pa'i yon tan]. This chapter is a wonderful advertisement for bodhicitta, just as these days television commercials advertise the qualities of a product. If people do not hear about the qualities and benefits of bodhicitta, they will never aspire to generate it in their minds.

As soon as one understands bodhicitta's inconceivable qualities, however, one will certainly think, "I need these teachings on how to develop bodhicitta." Generally, treatises list the qualities of the topic under discussion at the end of the text. Śāntideva is here more intelligent, keen as he is to advertise the qualities of bodhicitta right at the text's beginning. If someone is sick and hears about appropriate medicine which will cure him, he will certainly follow his physician's advice and take the medicine at once.

Text section 200:

First, Śāntideva explains the support for bodhicitta [byang chub sems kyi rten bshad], the basis upon which bodhicitta can arise [bskyed sa'i gzhi]. This basis is the precious human body, which itself is the support for the mind. The mind is the support for the precious bodhicitta. A human existence endowed with the eight freedoms and ten advantages is very difficult to attain, and, therefore, Śāntideva says in stanza 4: *These freedoms and advantages are extremely difficult to obtain* [dal 'byor 'di ni rnyed par shin tu dka']."

Text section 201:

Looking at the human body and considering what it is free from, one can enumerate *eight freedoms* [dal ba brgyad]. In general, *freedom* means having the opportunity to practice dharma. *Lack of freedom* [mi dal ba] refers to eight unfortunate conditions [mi khoms pa'i gnas brgyad] that lack such an opportunity. *The eight freedoms* [dal ba brgyad] are not being born in any of the eight states without freedom, which are:

> (1) Being born in a hell realm, (2) as a hungry ghost,
> (3) As an animal, (4) as a long-living god, or (5) as a barbarian,
> (6) Having wrong views, (7) being born (at a time) when there is no buddha,
> Or (8) being born as a retarded person; these are the eight states without freedom.

These eight unfortunate conditions include four unfortunate conditions of non-humans [mi ma yin pa'i mi khom pa bzhi] and four unfortunate conditions of humans

[mi'i mi khom pa bzhi]. The four unfortunate conditions of non-humans are (1) being born in a hell realm, (2) as a hungry ghost, (3) as an animal, and (4) as a long-living god. The four unfortunate conditions of humans are being born (5) as a barbarian, (6) in a land of those with wrong views, (7) in a land when a buddha has not come, and (8) as a retarded person.

1. Being born in a *hell realm* [dmyal ba], one has no opportunity to practice the dharma because one is constantly tormented by intense suffering in one of the eighteen hell realms. These are the eight hot hells,[1496] the eight cold hells,[1497] the temporary hells [nyi tshe ba],[1498] and the neighboring hells [nye 'khor ba], which are also called the sixteen additional neighoring hells [nye 'khor lhag pa bcu drug].[1499]
2. Being born as a *hungry ghost*, a preta [yi dvags], one has no opportunity to practice the dharma because of the suffering one experiences from hunger and thirst. There are two types of pretas: those who live collectively [bying la gnas pa'i yi dvags] and those who move through space. Pretas who live collectively suffer from external

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1496 The eight hot hells [tsha dmal brgyad; skr. aṣṭa-aṣṇa-naraka] are (1) the reviving hell [yang sos; saṃjīva], (2) the black-line hell [thig nag; skr. kālasūtra], (3) the rounding-up and crushing hell [bsdus 'joms; skr. saṃghāta], (4) the howling hell [ngu 'bod; skr. rāurava], (5) the great howling hell [ngu 'bod chen po; skr. mahārāurava], (6) the heating hell [tsha ba; skr. tāpana], (7) the intense heating hell [rab tu tsha ba; pratāpana], and (8) the hell of ultimate torment [mnar med pa; skr. avīci]. See, *Words of My Perfect Teacher*, pages 63-66; and *Jewel Ornament*, pages 97-99.

1497 The eight cold hells [grang dmyal brgyad; skr. aṣta-śīta-naraka] are (1) the hell of blisters [chu bur can; skr. arbuda], (2) the hell of burst blisters [chu bur rdol ba can; skr. nirarbuda], (3) the hell of clenched teeth [so tham tham pa; skr. aṭdaṭa], (4) the hell of lamentations [a chu chu zer ba; skr. hahava], (5) the hell of groans [kyi hud zer; skr. huhava], (6) the hell of utpal-like cracks [utpal ltar gas pa; skr. utpala], (7) the hell of lotus-like cracks [pad ma ltar gas pa; skr. padma], and (8) the hell of great lotus-like cracks [pad ma chen po ltar gas pa; skr. mahāpadma]. See, *Words of My Perfect Teacher*, pages 68-69; and *Jewel Ornament*, pages 100-101.

1498 See *Words of My Perfect Teacher*, pages 69-71; and *Jewel Ornament*, page 101.

1499 The neighboring hells [nye 'khor ba'i dmyal ba; pratyeka-naraka] are located in the four directions around the hell of ultimate torment [mnar med; skr. avīci]. In each of the four cardinal directions is (1) a pit of hot embers [me ma mur gyi 'obs; skr. kukūla]; (2) a swamp of putrescent corpses [ro myags kyi 'dab; skr. kuṇapa]; (3) a plain of razors [spu gri'i thang], with roads filled with razors [spu gri'i gtams po che; skr. kṣuramārga], forests of swords [ral gri'i tshal], trees which have razor leaves [ral gri'i lo ma; skr. asipattravana], and a forest of shalmali trees [shal ma li'i nags; skr. ayaḥśālmalīvana]; and (4) a river without a ford [chu bo rab med; skr. nadī-vaitaraṇī]. Together they constitute the sixteen additional neighboring hells. According to *Words of My Perfect Teacher,* in each of the intermediate directions stands a hill of iron shalmali trees [lcags kyi shal ma li'i sdong po] and the forest of swords [ral gri'i tshal] is mentioned as the fourth neighboring hell, while the *Jewel Ornament* counts the shalmali forest under the third neighboring hell and gives the river without a ford [chu bo rab med] as the fourth neighboring hell. See, *Words of My Perfect Teacher*, pages 66-68; and *Jewel Ornament*, pages 99-100.

obscurations [phyi'i sgrib pa can], internal obscurations [nang gi sgrib pa can], and specific obscurations [sgos khur gyi sgrib pa can].

3. Being born as *an animal* [dud 'gro], one has no opportunity to practice the dharma because one is enslaved [bkol spyod] and suffers from harming each other. Animals are classified into two categories: those living in the depths [bying la gnas pa] and those scattered in different places [kha 'thor ba].
4. Being born as a *long-living god* [lha tshe ring po], one has no opportunity to practice the dharma because one spends one's time in a stupor ['du shes med pa]. The environment of a long-living god is experienced as one of the four dhyana states. Their bodies manifest as a samadhi-body. They lack the ability to distinguish between happiness and suffering, virtue and negative deeds, and live in a state similar to deep sleep. They have neither physical nor mental sensation and are in a state of cessation. As they are free of concepts, they may live for eight great aeons, but they are totally separated from the sublime dharma, so they never have the chance to practice the dharma. Imagine that you have taken rebirth in such a state and consider whether or not you have the opportunity to practice the dharma.
5. Being born as *a barbarian* [kla klo], in a border country [yul mtha' 'khob], one has no opportunity to practice the dharma because the Buddhist doctrine is unknown in such places. Barbarians are primitive or savage human beings who have no knowledge of how to distinguish between virtue and negative deeds. Such people make offerings to spirits and demons with the blood of animals, and they believe that taking life is something good.
6. Being born among tīrthikas or among those with similar *wrong views* [log lta can], one has no opportunity to practice the dharma since one's mind is influenced by those mistaken views. This refers to human beings born in a land where the general world view is either eternalism or nihilism. Eternalists believe that the entire universe is created by an almighty god. Nihilists do not believe in the law of karma, in past and future lives, in enlightenment, and so forth. Such views prevent beings from meeting the genuine dharma.
7. Being in a dark aeon [mun pa'i bskal pa], at a time *when there is no buddha* [sangs rgyas kyis stong], one has no opportunity to practice the dharma because one has never even heard of the three jewels and cannot distinguish between virtuous and non-virtuous actions.
8. Being born as a *retarded person* [lkugs pa],[1500] one has no opportunity to practice the dharma since one's faculties are impaired. A retarded person is someone with a speech dysfunction [ngag lkugs pa], someone who is not able to talk [skad chad lab mi shes par 'gyur ba]. A retarded person is also someone with a mental disability [yid lkugs pa], an imbecile [glen pa]. A person who is born in such a condition is someone whose mind is not functioning properly [rang rgyud las su ma rungs pa]

[1500] For a detailed discussion of the term lkugs pa see *Illuminator*

and, therefore, cannot properly listen, contemplate or teach the dharma. A person born with a mental disability cannot properly comprehend the dharma.

Text section 202:

Considering the positive aspects of a human existence, the *ten advantages* ['byor ba bcu] are enumerated. These include the five individual advantages [rang 'byor lnga] and the five circumstantial advantages [gzhan 'byor lnga]. Nāgārjuna enumerates the individual advantages:

> (1) To be born as a human being, (2) in a central land, (3) with all one's sense faculties intact,
> (4) Not in an extreme karmic predicament, and (5) with faith in the dharma.

1. *To be born as a human being* [mi nyid]: Without a human life, one cannot even encounter the dharma. It is only the human realm that is truly conducive to dharma practice. Thus, the human body is the advantage of the support [mi'i lus rten gyi 'byor ba].
2. *To be born in a central land* [dbus skyes]: If one is born in a remote place where dharma is unheard of, there is no opportunity to come across it. You, however, were born in a region that is central as far as dharma is concerned and thus have the advantage of the place [yul gyi 'byor ba]. As to what is meant by a Central Land [yul dbus; madhyadeśa], one should distinguish between a geographically central land [sa tshigs kyi yul dbus] and a central land in terms of the dharma [chos tshigs kyi yul dbus]. Geographically speaking, the central land is said to be the Vajra Seat [skr. vajrāsana] of Bodhgaya, India, at the center of Jambudvīpa, the Southern Continent [lho 'dzam bu'i gling gi yul gyi dbus rgya gar rdo rje gdan], where the thousand buddhas of this Fortunate Aeon all attained enlightenment. In terms of dharma, a central land is any land where the dharma has spread [chos dar sa yi yul]. All other countries and regions are considered to be peripheral countries and border regions [mtha' 'khob].
3. *To be born with all one's sense faculties intact* [dbang po tshang]: Not to have all sense faculties intact is a hindrance to the practice of dharma. For instance, if you have no eyesight, you cannot see the representations of the body, speech, and mind, such as statues, scriptures, and stūpas. If your mental faculties [yid kyi dbang po] are impaired, you may be in a state of confusion that does not allow you to understand and practice the dharma. Being free of such disabilities, you have the advantage of possessing the sense faculties [dbang po yon tan gyi 'byor ba].
4. *To not be born in an extreme karmic predicament* [las mtha' ma log pa]: Perverted lifestyle refers to a lifestyle of people born in communities of hunters, butchers, mercenaries and so forth, who are immersed in non-virtuous actions from their early youth onward. This also includes anyone whose every thought, word and

deed is contrary to the dharma. Since you now wish to engage in positive actions, this is the advantage of an exalted particular intention [bsam pa'i khyad par gyi 'byor ba].

5. *To be born having faith in the dharma* [gnas la dad]: Lacking faith in the Buddha's teachings you would not feel any inclination toward the dharma. Being able to turn your mind to the dharma, as you are doing right now, constitutes the advantage of faith [dad pa'i 'byor ba].

Because these five advantages depend on the individual, they are called the five individual advantages, or the five advantages of the individual.

According to Nāgārjuna, the five circumstantial advantages are:

> (1) A buddha has appeared and (2) has taught the dharma;
> (3) His teachings still exist and (4) are practiced;
> And (5) there are those who are kind-hearted toward others.

1. *A buddha has appeared* [sangs rgyas byon]: Those not born in a bright aeon, one in which a buddha has appeared, have never even heard of the dharma. We are now in an aeon in which a buddha has appeared, however, so we possess the advantage of the presence of the exalted teacher [ston pa khyad par can gyi 'byor ba].
2. *He has taught the dharma* [des chos gsungs]: Although a buddha has come, had he not taught, no one would have benefited. Since the Buddha did turn the wheel of dharma in three successive stages, however, we have the advantage of the teaching of the sublime dharma [bstan pa dam pa'i chos kyi 'byor ba].
3. *His teachings still exist* [bstan pa gnas]: Although the Buddha has taught, had his doctrine died out, it would no longer be there to help us. However, the period during which the doctrine will remain in existence has not yet ended, and so we have the advantage of the time [dus kyi 'byor ba].
4. *The teachings are practiced* [de'i rjes 'jug]: Although the teachings still exist, unless we follow them they can be of no benefit to us. Since we have taken up the dharma, however, we possess the advantage of our own good fortune [rang gi skal bas 'byor ba].
5. *There are those who are kind-hearted toward others* [gzhan phyir snying ni brtse ba'o]: Although we have taken up the dharma, without the favorable circumstance of being accepted by a spiritual friend we could never learn what the dharma is really about. Since a spiritual friend has accepted us, we possess the advantage of his extraordinary compassion [lhag pa'i thugs rje'i 'byor ba].

Because these five factors depend on circumstances other than one's own and need to be complete, they are called the five circumstantial advantages, or the five advantages of the circumstances.

There are two kinds of benefit for people [skyes bu'i don]: temporary benefit [gnas skabs kyi don] and ultimate benefit [mthar thug gi don]. With this human rebirth we have now attained the opportunity [go skabs] to accomplish this twofold benefit. Not taking advantage of this present opportunity would be very foolish, as we will have great difficulty attaining such a perfect situation [rten phun sum tshogs pa] again in future lifetimes.

Text section 203:

What is known as the *precious human body* [mi lus rin po che] requires that the eight freedoms and all ten advantages be complete. If any of these eighteen components are missing, your existence is not considered to be a precious human body. We should reflect on the difficulty of attaining such a perfect situation again by contemplating the causes [rgyu], considering the difficulty through metaphor [dpe] and through numerical comparison [grangs].

Text section 204:

What is the cause for this human body endowed with the eight freedoms and ten advantages? Our present body results from our good karma [las]. Karma refers to positive or negative actions that create positive or negative results; it is created by our mind [sems]. To attain a human body one must carry through three kinds of virtuous karma [dge ba'i las gsum]: 1) keeping discipline [tshul khrims srung ba], 2) gathering merit [bsod nams bsags pa], and 3) making aspirations [smon lam gdab pa]. Many people find these three positive activities difficult to develop and very difficult to practice. Therefore, beings have a hard time attaining a human body. Their negative tendencies are so strong that they have no capacity to accumulate positive thoughts and feelings.

If we create the karma of perfect discipline [tshul khrims rnam par dag pa], we gather the karma for attaining a human body. The minimum discipline required to attain a human body in the next life is the 'discipline of giving up harming others' [gzhan gnod spong ba'i tshul khrims]. Thus, one should not harm others but should practice patience. If you lead a peaceful live without anger, you will gain a beautiful body in your next life. Moreover, if your mind is truly at ease and peaceful, in this life as well people will see the goodness in your face, even though you are not a particularly handsome person.

Discipline must be aided by the practice of the six transcendental perfections [pha rol tu phyin pa drug]. Among these, the practice of generosity is indispensable for attaining a favorable human condition. People who have practiced sufficient discipline to attain a human body but who have not practiced any generosity will be reborn in very miserable human conditions without the opportunity to practice the dharma. The other five transcendental perfections must also be practiced to some extent.

The second condition for attaining a human body is gathering merit [bsod nams bsags pa]. The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra teaches the perfect methods for gathering merit in

the second and third chapters. The gathering of merit through the practices of the 'seven branches' [yan lag bdun pa] is explained in great detail in those chapters.

The third condition for attaining a human body is aspiration [smon lam]. Only through aspirations will one meet the dharma in one's next life. Aspirations are of utmost importance. Even if you have attained rebirth as a very rich and healthy person, you will not be able to practice the dharma unless you have made many aspirations in former lifetimes. Many people have gathered merit in former lifetimes but have failed to make aspirations. Therefore, you should repeat this famous aspiration by Longchenpa everyday at the end of your practice session:

> Throughout all lifetimes, wherever I may be born,
> May I obtain the seven qualities of the higher realms.
> May I meet the dharma immediately after taking birth
> And have the freedom to practice it properly.
>
> / gang du skyes pa'i skye ba thams cad du /
> / mtho ris yon tan bdun ldan thob par shog /
> / skyes ma thag tu chos dang 'phrad gyur nas /
> / tshul bzhin bsgrub pa'i rang dbang yod par shog /
>
> May I please my sublime masters
> And practice the dharma day and night.
> Having received the dharma, may I accomplish its innermost essence
> And traverse the ocean of worldly existence in that very life.
>
> / der yang bla ma dam pa mnyes byas nas /
> / nyin dang mtshan du chos la spyod par shog /
> / chos thob nas ni snying po'i don bsgrub te /
> / tshe des srid pa'i rgya mtsho brgal bar shog /
>
> Within the world may I perfectly teach the sublime doctrine
> And never become weary and tired of accomplishing the welfare of others.
> May all beings simultaneously attain buddhahood
> Through my vast and impartial service to others.
>
> / srid par dam pa'i chos rab ston byed cing /
> / gzhan phan bsgrub la skyo ngal med par shog /
> / rlabs chen gzhan don phyogs ris med pa yis /
> / thams cad phyam gcig sangs rgyas thob par shog //

Even if you do not know how to practice the dharma, at least you should know how to make aspirations. Through an aspiration such as this, you guarantee that you will

meet the dharma again in your next life and that you will be endowed with the seven qualities of the higher realms [mtho ris yon tan bdun]. According to Mipham Rinpoche these are: longevity [tshe ring ba], absence of disease [nad med pa], a beautiful body [gzugs bzang ba], good fortune [skal ba bzang ba], high caste [rigs mtho ba], great wealth [nor mang ba], and great intelligence [shes rab che ba].[1501] The higher realms refer to the three higher realms of humans, gods and asuras.

If you abstain from taking life, you will have a long life. Abstaining from beating and abusing beings, you will be free from illness. Always maintaining patience, you will have a beautiful body. Having good fortune means that you will succeed [lam 'gro] at whatever you plan to do. You will not encounter obstacles [bar chad med pa] or unfavorable conditions [rkyen ngan pa] in your life and will be able to easily accomplish your wishes. In particular, you will be successful in your dharma practice. All this covers the meaning of 'having good fortune' [skal bzang].

If you have intensely practiced meditation [bsam gtan] in past lifetimes and have always paid respect [gus zhabs] to your teachers, you will experience good fortune in this life. 'High caste' means that you come from a well-educated family, who imparted to you proper values. A high caste does not refer to royalty or celebrity. It means that your family is of noble mind and does not follow a perverted occupation such as being a mercenary, a butcher, a thief, and so on. If one happens to be born into a family that practices improper livelihood, one will naturally be affected by the negative environment. Diligence in former lifetimes leads to rebirth in a high caste. Great generosity in former lifetimes leads to great wealth in this life. If you have practiced the dharma in former lifetimes, you will be endowed with great intelligence.

Make aspirations to meet the dharma immediately on taking rebirth. Once you have met the dharma, please [thugs mnyes pa byed pa] your master. At best make the offering of practice [rab sgrub pa'i mchod]; second best, serve your master with your body and speech ['bring lus ngag gi zhabs tog]; at the very least, you should please your master with material offerings [zang zing gi mchod pa]. Dedicate yourself to dharma practice day and night.

Having received the dharma, strive to practice the quintessential teachings and transcend the ocean of saṃsāra in this very lifetime. Pray that once you have gone beyond saṃsāra you will be able to teach the dharma and work tirelessly for the welfare of others. Pray that through your vast [rgya chen po / brlabs chen po] and impartial [phyogs ris med pa] service to others, all beings may be simultaneously established on the level of perfect buddhahood. You should recite this perfect aspiration again and again. Aspiration is a very powerful volitional action and has great karmic force.

Text section 205:

1501 *mi pham mkhas 'jug*, page 176.

The famous *example* or *metaphor* [dpe] of the unlikeliness of attaining a human rebirth is that of a blind turtle dwelling at the bottom of the ocean and swimming up to the surface only once every hundred years. The likelihood of this turtle ever accidentally sticking its neck through a single yoke floating on the vast ocean's surface is very slim.

Concerning this example of the turtle [rus sbal gyi dpe], understand the ocean to be a metaphor for the endless suffering of the three lower realms, which are as vast and deep as the ocean. The blind turtle is a metaphor for the beings of the three lower realms who lack the vision [mig] to distinguish between what must be accepted and rejected. Also, while the turtle's rising to the ocean's surface only once every 100 years is very rare, liberation is even rarer than this. Just as the hole in the yoke is very small, so is the chance to achieve rebirth in the body of a god or a human being. That the yoke is tossed hither and thither by the wind is analogous to our karmic dependency [gzhan dbang can] on virtuous and negative deeds.

Reflect on the difficulty of attaining a human body through this example as well as through numerical comparisons. If you compare the number of insects in the world to the number of human beings, you realize how many more beings are reborn as insects than as humans. Furthermore, the number of beings living in the ocean far exceeds the number of humans. Among all human beings in the world, moreover, only a few follow the dharma [chos pa], and among those who do follow the Buddhist teachings, only a small number are actually practitioners [nyams len bso mkhan].

Text section 206:

Considering the relative numbers of the different kinds of beings, you come to appreciate that being born a human is hardly possible at all. The largest number of beings dwell in the hell realms. It is said that as many beings dwell in hell *as there are specks of dust in the whole world* [sa chen po'i rdul lta bu], that there are as many pretas *as particles of sand in the Ganges* [chu bo gang ga'i bye ma snyed lta bu], *as many animals as ferment particles in a beer barrel* [chang gi 'gag gi sbang ma lta bu], and as many asuras *as snowflakes in a blizzard* [kha ba bu yug 'tshub pa lta bu]. The Buddha also said that gods and humans are as few *as the particles of dust you can heap on your fingernail* [sen mo'i steng gi rdul lta bu].

Text section 207:

Using a *metaphor* [dpe], the inhabitants of the hells are said to be as numerous as the stars in the night sky and the pretas no more numerous than the stars visible in the daytime. This means that there are very few pretas (hungry ghosts) compared to the number of inhabitants of the hell realms.

If there were as many pretas as stars at night, the number of animals would be like stars in the daytime, which means there are far more pretas than there are animals. And if there were as many animals as stars in the night sky, the number of gods and humans would be only as many as stars in the daytime, meaning there are far more animals than there are gods and humans.

The tradition of Jigme Lingpa's preliminary practices of the 'Longchen Nying Thig' [klong chen snying thig] holds that one should recite the lines about the difficulty of attaining a human rebirth at least three times every day. Most people take their human body for granted and do not consider it a privilege. You must be aware that you do have at this time an extraordinary opportunity [go skabs] and a very special physical support [khyad par can gyi rten]. You must realize the value of your human body. This human body is the perfect vehicle; it provides us with the best possible chance to develop the precious bodhicitta [byang chub sems rin po che]. Although all beings are equally endowed with the perfect buddha nature [bde gshegs snying po], the human body alone constitutes the perfect condition for developing bodhicitta. Even an ant has buddha nature, but no ant can develop bodhicitta and progress on the path to enlightenment.

In general, the Buddha's teachings are vast [rgya chen po] and profound [gting zab po]. While our human mind is of very limited scope, the mind of the Buddha is unlimited, and his knowledge is equally boundless. The Buddha knows everything throughout space and time; his knowledge penetrates the past, present and future. His mind pervades the infinity of space, and he knows everything at once. He knows, sees, hears, smells, and so forth in an unlimited way.

There seems to be a vast difference between the unlimited perspective of the Buddha and our narrow perspective. His topic of teaching might be too vast and our minds too narrow. We could have great difficulty in truly understanding the Buddha's realization and what his teachings are talking about. This difficulty is only due to our own limitations and not because the Buddha's teaching is flawed.

Really understanding a Buddhist text is not at all easy. The pith instruction, therefore, is: "Expand your mind!" Open your mind beyond its habitual limits; contemplate on infinite space and expand your scope as much as possible. Only with a vast mind can you understand the scriptures of the Buddha's teachings.

When you contemplate the difficulty of obtaining this human body, you are reflecting on the noble truth of suffering, the first of the four noble truths [bden pa bzhi]. This body is considered to be defiling [zag bcas] and is subject to the truth of suffering [sdug bsngal bden pa]. Meditate on the truth of suffering by reflecting on the difficulty of obtaining a human body, and you will become a good practitioner.

For a practitioner of Vajrayāna, reflecting on the difficulty of obtaining this human body is indispensable. A Vajrayāna practitioner understands that this mind in this human body is endowed with buddha nature [bde gshegs snying po], that this human body provides the best circumstances for developing the precious bodhicitta. A Vajrayāna practitioner also understands the reasons for visualizing this body as a deity and why pure perception [dag snang] must be practiced. The practitioner understands that all beings are primordially male and female deities, that visualization practices [bskyed rim] are a conceptual imitation of enlightened perspective.

The practice of pure perception [dag snang] means to view yourself and the entire universe as a display of deity, mantra and awareness. Through this practice you

conceptually imitate the Buddha's pure perfection, acknowledging primordial purity for what it is. Failing to understand that the perspective of the buddha nature is infinite purity, you do not understand Vajrayāna. Pure perception is the key to Vajrayāna.

Many practitioners visualize their body as a deity but feel in their hearts that they are doing something strange. They practice the visualization because they are told to do so, not understanding that such visualization is a skillful method to jump to the Buddha's enlightened perspective. They do not know how to mingle the practices of skillful means and wisdom. The visualizations of pure perception are practices of skillful means and must always be mingled with the recognition of buddha nature, which is the practice of wisdom. Only when practicing the unity of skillful means and wisdom will one swiftly progress toward enlightenment.

Truly appreciating the difficulty of obtaining a human body will gradually lead to pure perception. Therefore, do not belittle this contemplation and regard it as unimportant. Contemplating the difficulty of obtaining the human body is part of the contemplation of the truth of suffering and has great implications.

If you look at the life stories of the great masters of old, you realize that they had only very few disciples who became great masters themselves and reached high levels of attainment such as the rainbow body. This is because most dharma students are not truly able to disconnect from worldly activities. Most spend their lives in a mixture of dharma practice and worldly involvement.

Text section 208:

The term *person* [skyes bu; skr, puruṣa] literally means 'child born from the force of karma' [las las skyes pa'i bu]. You can be a person born from bad karma [las ngan pa] or from good karma [las bzang po]. The past karma is like the mother, and the person is like the child.

The term person refers to a 'person who has potential to practice the dharma' [chos sgrub pa'i nus pa yod mkhan gyi gang zag], someone who can understand what to accept and what to reject [blang dor ha go mkhan], someone who is ready to practice the dharma [chos nyams len dus la bab yod mkhan]. An insect is a sentient being [sems can] but not a person since it lacks the capacity to practice the dharma.

The three kinds of persons [skyes bu gsum] are: the person of minor mental capacity [skyes bu chung nga'i blo], the person of average mental capacity [skyes bu 'bring gi blo], and the person of highest mental capacity [skyes bu chen po'i blo]. The person of minor mental capacity aspires only to practice 'virtue that concords with worldly merit' ['jig rten gyi bsod nams cha mthun gyi dge ba]. This refers to an ordinary worldly person who practices virtue in order to attain rebirth in the three higher realms of saṃsāra.

The person of average capacity aspires to practice 'virtue that concords with liberation of the lesser vehicle' [then dman thar pa cha mthun pa'i dge ba]. Such a person follows the

path of Hīnayāna and aspires to reach the level of a śrāvaka arhat or of a pratyekabuddha.

The person of highest mental capacity aspires to accomplish 'perfect enlighenment for the welfare of others' [gzhan don du rdzogs byang sgrub pa]. Such a person accumulates 'virtue that concords with the liberation of the greater vehicle' [theg chen thar pa cha mthun gyi dge ba]. It is the *virtue of directing the mind to supreme enlightenment* [byang chub mchog tu thugs bskyed pa'i dge ba]. This refers to a person who follows the path of Mahāyāna, the path of the bodhisattvas, and who aspires to become a perfectly enlightened buddha. The true purpose of human life is to accomplish one of these three levels according to one's mental capacities.

Text section 209:

A qualified master [mtshan ldan gyi bla ma] refers to a master who is endowed with genuine bodhicitta [bcos ma ma yin pa'i byang chub sems], who has received the empowerments and keeps the samāyas; who has mastered view, meditation and conduct; who has gained the signs of recitation and freed his mind through realization. A qualified master is peaceful and compassionate. From such a qualified master one should receive the *profound instructions* [zab mo gdams ngag], the teachings on how to realize profound emptiness [zab mo stong pa nyid], the essence of one's mind. The profound instructions on how to realize the view of emptiness are taught in sūtra as well as in tantra.

This human body is difficult to gain but easy to lose through disease, famine and weapons [nad mug mtshon gsum]. Therefore, one should give up all worldly activities. As practictioners we must give up the *major jobs* [che bzhag] in life and drop the *minor duties* [chung bskyur], simply leaving them unfinished.

Text section 210:

The phrase *spend your time with dharma practice* [rang mgo nyi ma chos kyis bton] means 'as long as the sun is shining on one's head, spend your time with the dharma' [rang gi mgo la dus tshod yod pa chos la 'bad stsol btang dgos].

Atiśa said that life is short and the fields of knowledge so many that one cannot possibly know them all. Therefore, as we do not know how much lifespan remains to us, we should not even try to study everything but rather should use our time well. Atiśa advises that we should be like the swan, said to be able to separate milk from water. Just as swans extract milk from water, practitioners should be able to extract the most essential points of practice from the vast teachings of the dharma.

Text section 211 / stanza 5:

This part of the text illustrates the difficulty of generating a virtuous thought [dge ba'i blo], the difficulty of generating the mindset of wishing to practice virtue [dge ba sgrub

'dod gyi blo]. Such a mindset is *the mental basis* [sems kyi rten] conducive to developing bodhicitta. Lacking such a mindset, developing bodhicitta is impossible.

Such a mindset is as brief and rare as a flash of lightning that illuminates the darkness of the night. Imagine a pitch black night with neither moon nor stars, the sky covered by cloudbanks from which rain pours down. You cannot see a thing. Only when lightning flashes can you for a split second see the *shapes* [gzugs] around you. In this way, we spend our entire lives controlled by the darkness of the five mind poisons [dug lnga]: desire ['dod chags], aversion [zhe sdang], ignorance [gti mug], arrogance [nga rgyal], and jealousy [phrag dog]. On rare occasions, however, through the blessing power of the buddhas, a virtuous [dge ba'i rnam rtog] or meritorious thought [bsod nams kyi rnam rtog] arises in our minds. When such a thought arises, sustaining and nurturing it is crucial.

Night-time means that the sun is absent [nyi ma med pa'i skabs pa mtshan mo zer gi yod red]. *Pitch black darkness* indicates a night without even the moon's light [zla ba med pa'i skabs la mun nag zer gi yod red]. When the stars are covered, it is due to *cloudbanks* [skar ma med pa'i skabs la sprin rum zer gi yod red]. On such a night nothing can be seen. This pitch black darkness of the night exemplifies our ignorance [gti mug gi dpe]. If *a flash of lightning* [glog 'gyu] brightly illuminates the darkness, one will be able to see the houses, trees, and flowers very clearly *for just a brief moment* [skad cig ma tsam la].

The example of the night, without any sun, actually means that the wisdom sun of the Buddha [sangs rgyas kyi ye shes] has not arisen. When the Buddha does not cause the wisdom sun to arise by teaching the dharma, people cannot distinguish between virtue and non-virtue. Sentient beings are, therefore, living in darkness. The cloudbanks indicate that beings' minds are captivated by the five mind poisons.

When bodhicitta and the buddhas' aspirations join forces with the merit that beings have accumulated in former lifetimes, a virtuous thought may occasionally arise in the minds of sentient beings. Such virtuous thoughts seem to arise for no apparent reason; in fact, they are triggered by the combined power of the blessings of the buddhas and the good actions beings accumulated in former lifetimes. However, these virtuous thoughts and intentions do not last very long for most people.

Both night and darkness are images of ignorance [ma rig pa] and delusion [gti mug]. The wisdom of the Buddha [sangs rgyas kyi ye shes kyi nyi ma] is compared to the sun, and the knowledge to distinguish between what to do and what to avoid [blang dor gyi gnas shes pa'i shes rab] is compared to the moon. The cloudbanks that obscure the sky are images of the mind poisons [dug].

The term *briefly* [thang 'ga'] means 'momentarily' [yud tsam rer] and refers to time, as in one moment among a hundred or two among a thousand [brgya lan re stong lan gnyis tsam]. But the same term also means 'rarely', suggesting one thought out of a hundred or two out of a thousand.

A virtuous thought like, "I will practice the dharma" almost never arises. When it does arise, it does not arise repeatedly, nor does it last long, because sentient beings have not built up a habitual pattern of such virtuous thoughts.

Text section 212:

Since time without beginning beings have mainly familiarized themselves with non-virtue [mi dge ba] and afflictions [nyon mong pa]. When a virtuous thought such as, "I will practice the dharma; I want to reach enlightenment" does arise in one's mind, it is like the tail of a cow, which must be grasped by a blind person who has been lost in a vast desert for a long time.

One might wonder if bodhicitta can arise only if one is born as a human being. Generally speaking, bodhicitta is easier to develop from a human rebirth. Some exceptional beings have developed bodhicitta from rebirth in other realms, however. Buddha Śākyamuni, for example, is said to have first developed a mind of loving kindness,[1502] not bodhicitta, when born in the hell realm.

Longchenpa recounts this story according to the Ratna-kūṭa[1503] in his History of the Dharma:[1504]

> In a previous life, before Buddha Śākyamuni had become a bodhisattva, he was born in a hell where the inhabitants were forced to pull wagons. Harnessed to a wagon with his companion, the two of them were too weak to move their vehicle. The guards goaded them on, beating them with red-hot weapons, causing incredible suffering.
>
> The future Buddha thought, "Even two of us together cannot get the wagon to move, and each of us is suffering as much as the other. I will pull it and suffer alone, so that my companion can be relieved."
>
> He said to the guards, "Put his harness over my back, I will pull the cart on my own." The guards became furious, yelling, "Who can prevent others from experiencing the effects of their own actions?" and beating him about the head with their clubs. This good thought, however, immediately released our teacher from that life in hell, and he was reborn in a celestial realm of the 'thirty-three gods', where he attained the perfect body of a celestial child and was born into a perfect caste. It is taught that this was how he first began to benefit others. Furthermore, it is said that he purified his negative karma through this, marking the beginning of his positive karma.

After the future Buddha left the celestial realm, he took rebirth among humans as the son of a poor potter with the name Prabhāsa [snang byed].[1505] The story of this rebirth is as follows:

1502 *mdzangs blun*, pages 429-431, sangs rgyas thog ma byams pa'i sems bskyed pa'i le'u.

1503 *Ratna-kūṭa* [dkon mchog brtegs pa]. The same story is also found in the *mdzangs blun*, story 44, pages 429-431.

1504 *klong chen chos 'byung*, pages 76-79.

1505 Some sources give skr. Ābhākara for the Tibetan snang byed.

Three countless aeons ago, in an aeon called 'Beautiful Appearance' [mdzes par snang ba], a buddha with the name 'The Great Śākyamuni' lived in a city called Varuna [ba ru na]. He looked exactly like our Buddha Śākyamuni, and at that time he was teaching the dharma in the center of the city. Because it was a time of the five decadences, where beings had a lifespan of a hundred years and were small in physical size, this buddha had appeared accordingly, with equal lifespan and size.

The first person among his entourage ['khor 'dus pa'i dang po] was a monk called 'King of Dharma Teachers' [chos smra ba'i rgyal po], who had the power of samādhi and later became Bodhisattva Mañjuśrī. While he was dwelling in samādhi, he viewed with his clairvoyance which being was developing, which declining, which had the potential to become a buddha, and which would go to the hell realms. He saw that the son of a potter with the name Prabhāsa [snang byed], someone of low caste, who lived at the periphery of the city, had the potential to become a buddha. To tame him, this monk went to the city to beg for alms, taking his begging bowl filled with rice gruel. He went to the potter's house, but both father and mother had gone out to work. He met the child, who was playing. The boy Prabhāsa walked straight up to the monk and asked, "Monk, what do you hold in your hand?" 'King of Dharma Teachers' replied, "This is food that is endowed with a hundred flavors." "If that is so, then give it to me!" answered the boy. The monk blessed the food and gave the begging bowl to the boy, who became attached to the flavor. As the boy was very hungry, he followed the monk.

Due to the great power of the monk 'King of Dharma Teachers' and the pure karma of the child Prabhāsa, they arrived at the palace of 'The Great Śākyamuni' as quickly as a man can bend his stretched arm. Through the monk's magical power they went to the center of the city. When the boy saw the Buddha he was amazed and asked the monk, "Who is this?" The old monk replied, "This monk is the Buddha." The boy asked, "How did he become like this?" "He became like this," the monk explained, "because he developed bodhicitta and gathered the accumulations." "Can I become like this?" inquired the boy. "If you develop bodhicitta you can become like this." At that moment the child developed faith, offered the whole begging bowl filled with rice gruel to the Buddha and developed bodhicitta.

The potters, husband and wife, were looking for their lost son and could not find him anywhere. Finally they found him in the center of the city. Prabhāsa begged his parents to let him become a monk, and they granted his wish. He asked the Buddha, "I beg you to make me a monk." Requested like this, the Buddha consented and said, "Come forth, monk!" The child's hair and facial hair were miraculously shaved, and he turned

into a monk dressed in the saffron robes. Thus, he had developed bodhicitta based on a begging bowl filled with rice gruel.

Prabhāsa offered five cowrie shells ['gron bu lnga], a pair of shoes [mchil lham zung gcig], an umbrella made of fine Benares cloth [ras kā śi ka],[1506] and a pot of fired clay [rdza bum so btang ba] filled with water. According to the Bhadrakalpika-sūtra he generated bodhicitta and made the following famous aspiration:

Lord Buddha, just like your body,
Lifespan, size, realm of activities,
Just like your noble and supreme marks,
May I and all beings become exactly like you.

de bzhin gshegs pa khyed sku ci 'dra dang
'khor dang sku tshe'i tshad dang zhing khams dang
khyod kyi mtshan mchog bzang po ci 'dra ba
de 'dra kho nar bdag kyang 'gyur bar shog

Khenpo Chöga adds to the story: Prabhāsa made this aspiration with great devotion, expressing his desire to become exactly like the Buddha with the same body, the same entourage, the same lifespan, the same size, taking rebirth in the same world, having the same qualities of body, voice and mind. After he made the aspiration, the Great Buddha Śākyamuni took the end of his shawl between the fingers of his right hand, forming two horns, and placed his right hand on the boy's head, saying, "May you attain enlightenment as the perfectly enlightened Buddha, as the glorious Śākyamuni," thus making a prediction.

That aspiration was the first aspiration our teacher Buddha Śākyamuni ever made. Based on this aspiration and based on the blessings and prediction of the buddha called the 'Great Śākyamuni', our Buddha actually became exactly like him and is also called Buddha Śākyamuni. This story marks the beginning of Buddha Śākyamuni's bodhisattva activity.

Text section 213:

To be resolute [blo sna bstung ste] means to be resolved and certain that you want to practice the dharma. You need to hold on to that idea without wavering. You should not discuss this decision with your father nor with your mother as they will only dissuade you from practicing the dharma.

1506 Kāśi is the old name for Benares (Vārāṇasī). The Sanskrit term kāśika or kāśikā refers to valuable textile products from Benares.

The phrase: "*Not handing over the power of decision to other people, I will maintain my own independence*", literally means "Not handing my nose-rope over to others but fastening it around my own head" [rang sna mi lag tu mi gtod par sna thag rang mgor dkril nas]. This phrase means, 'I will not hand over the power of decision to practice the dharma to other people, but I will maintain my own decision-making power [chos sgrub pa'i rang dbang mi gzhan la ma gnang / rang dbang rang la zin dgos]. The example comes from Tibetan yaks, who have rings through their noses with pieces of rope attached. The yak must follow wherever the rope is pulled. When the nose-rope is wrapped around the yak's own head [sna thag rang gi mgor dkris], it can go wherever it wishes. In the same way, those who truly want to practice the dharma should make up their own minds and not hand the power of decision to other people. The resolve to practice must come from oneself and should not be discussed with relatives and friends.

I will leave my enemies to themselves [dgra gnya' ring du btang] means, 'May they do whatever they want to do, it is not my business any longer'. Literally it means, 'I will place my enemies high and far'. *I will let my fields dry up* [zhing tha reng du byas / zhing ka skam por song byung shog] means giving up one's fields, since maintaining them requires work.

Make the following resolve: "Giving up my ordinary life, I will commit myself to practicing the genuine dharma, such as the ten ultimate jewels [phugs nor bcu] of the old Kadampas and the three wrathful mantras [drags sngags gsum] of master Tsang pa Gyare."

Text section 214:

Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche taught about the ten jewels of the Kadampa masters. The Kadampa masters of old gave instructions on how to leave behind all concerns for this life when practicing genuine dharma, instructions called the ten ultimate jewels [phugs nor bcu]. They are: 'discarding, joining and achieving' [bud bsnyegs thob gsum], the four pointers [gtad sa bzhi], and the three vajras [rdo rje gsum]. These ten ultimate jewels of the Kadampa masters set the standards for genuine practitioners who aspire to attain enlightenment in one lifetime. Those practitioners are called 'those who have given up all worldly activities' [bya bral ba / 'jig rten gyi bya ba dang bral ba]. The Indian master Atīśa brought these instructions to Tibet.

Discarding, joining and attaining [bud bsnyegs thob gsum]:

> Discard the company of humans.
> Join the company of dogs.
> Attain the company of the gods.

Discard the company of humans [mi gral nas bud]: A yogin like this is no longer counted as an ordinary human. Milarepa said, "When I look at people, I think they are crazy; when people look at me, they think I am crazy." By not maintaining ordinary relationships, the yogin chooses to leave the community of human beings. A true

yogin does not follow the social conventions of human beings. Ordinary human beings commit many wicked deeds trying to protect their families [gnyen skyong] and fighting with their enemies [dgra 'dul].

A yogin who maintains social ties with ordinary worldly beings must adjust to their thoughts and behavior [bsam spyod]. Ordinary beings are completely in the thrall of the five afflictions, the five mind poisons [nyon mong dug lnga], such as desire ['dod chags], aversion [zhe sdang], ignorance [gti mug], arrogance [nga rgyal], and jealousy [phrag dog]. Following social patterns based on these five poisons would lead the yogin to forsake genuine dharma practice, preventing the attainment of complete enlightenment in this lifetime.

Normally we rely on others [gzhan la ltos], reasoning in this way: "Oh, if I do not visit him, he will be angry; if I do not give her something, she will be upset." We believe that maintaining relationships is a good thing. The great masters like Milarepa, Longchenpa, Jigme Lingpa and Paltrül Rinpoche, however, did not consider friendships, clothing, riches and food to be important. They had no dinner parties to attend, no friends to please with gifts, no worries about whether or not they were respected within the community. Not relying on others, they were not pulled away from their practice. They relied upon awareness practice alone and had no interest other than attaining enlightenment in this very lifetime.

Externally, avoid the distraction of saṃsāric activities. Internally, do not let your mind stray from your practice. If you can give up outer and inner distractions, your mind will be very clear [dvangs ba]. In this clear state of mind, meditation, renunciation, compassion, devotion and so forth will come very easily. To achieve this, you should stay in seclusion. Once you have truly recognized buddha nature, have confidence in the instructions of your root guru and do not run after every teacher or teaching. Stay by yourself and practice.

Join the company of dogs [khyi gral bsnyegs]: A true yogin has abandoned all concepts of pure and impure. He would eat with dogs. Not becoming happier if treated nicely, a yogin also does not become depressed if he is ignored. Like a stray street dog, he is an object for neither praise nor blame. He keeps a low profile, wears ragged clothes, begs for food and has no interest in being well thought of. Worldly success, fine clothes, sumptuous food and good repute he would consider as defects. He is beyond hope and fear, having attained the view of equanimity. He stays hidden from people. If praised, he is not elated, and if blamed he is not depressed. Such a yogin knows that fame and honor are stains of Māra. Other people do not even notice his existence. Nobody would expect anything from such a yogin, nor would he expect anything from anybody else. He remains a hidden yogin.

Attain the company of the gods [lha gral thob pa]: Such a yogin has given up all attachment to the eight worldly concerns. Despite a human body, his mind is enlightened, and thus, he has reached the company of the gods. Ordinary beings are involved in the eight worldly concerns, and by virtue of this involvement they have joined the company of demons ['dre gral]. A yogin has only one aim in life—to attain perfect

enlightenment. To realize this aim he practices tirelessly day and night. Only practicing the divine dharma [lha chos], he has reached the seat of practice [nyams len gyi gdan thob]. The phrase 'having attained the company of the gods' means that the yogin is totally immersed in dharma practice [chos kyi nang la tshud].

The four pointers [gtad sa bzhi]:

> Direct your mind to the dharma.
> Conduct your dharma practice in poverty.
> Stay poor until you die.
> Die in a lonely cave.

Direct your mind to the dharma [blo phugs chos la gtad]: As you have achieved a precious human body, put all your interest and energy into the teachings. Do not waste your energy and time with other things. Decide to practice for your entire life and never abandon dharma practice, no matter what happens. Concentrate all your energy on dharma alone. Do not waste any time with worldly activities of ordinary relationships, creating a family, making a career and so forth. These activities are all based on the eight worldly concerns.

Practicing the dharma is not a far distant aim, only accessible to high yogins. Dharma practice happens in one's mind. The genuine yogin practices the instruction of 'knowing one—freeing all' [gcig shes kun grol]. He has received the instructions of the Great Perfection [rdzogs pa chen po], the essence of all the eighty-four thousand teachings of the Buddha. These instructions enable the yogin to practice the genuine recognition of mind essence, the buddha nature, the one point that frees all.

Conduct your dharma practice in poverty [chos phugs sprang la gtad]: Do not become rich. Do not waste time accumulating [bsog], maintaining [bsrung] and increasing ['phel] wealth. Do not become a servant of your wealth. If you serve money and wealth, you will never succeed in accomplishing the teachings. That is the reason for a life of poverty, a life without distractions. Poverty means you have a place for retreat, clothes to wear and enough to eat and drink; no more, no less. A true practitioner does not aspire to riches nor does he strive for fame. He does not follow any worldly aims. Such a yogin knows that these basic requirements are enough [chog shes] for living a lifetime dedicated to practice. As long as one limits oneself to these basic requirements, one will be able to practice genuine dharma. The moment you begin looking for more, Māra has entered your mind.

Stay poor until you die [sprang phugs shi la gtad]: Remain a poor practitioner all your life. Do not in your later years become a business person. Do not revert to a life of distractions. Remain a simple and humble practitioner until the end. Many practitioners stay in retreat in the mountains for a few years and then become famous, have many students and become rich. A true practitioner should stay poor all his life. Paltrül Rinpoche said that a true practitioner of the Longchen Nyingtig tradition never aims to reach high positions. Thus, a practitioner does not seek the approval and

praise of other people nor does he get upset by unjust criticism from others. He remains low key all his life.

Never lose the thought, "I might die tonight." Although we know that we must die, we still expect longevity. Be aware that the time of death is uncertain. People die while walking, talking, sitting, eating or sleeping. You as well could die at any moment. Really take that to heart. There is no time to waste. Every minute could be your last. Think, "Death comes now; my time is up. There is nothing left to do but practice." With this attitude you will accomplish the teachings. Otherwise, you will not.

Wherever you are, you are subject to separation from loved ones. You might meet with enemies. You might get sick. In any case you must die eventually. Whatever is born must die. Whatever is hoarded must be dispersed. Whatever is joined must be separated. Whatever is built will be destroyed.

If you want deeply felt renunciation to arise [gdeng nas nges 'byung skye ba], reflect on the pointlessness [snying po med pa] of saṃsāric existence. Think like this, "Worldly life is pointless; having friends is pointless; having enemies is pointless; wealth and riches are pointless; fame and fortune are pointless. Wherever I look I see only the pointlessness of saṃsāra."

Seeing the pointlessness of saṃsāra a vivid suffering arises in one's mind [sems sdug lhung nge 'ong ba de]. This suffering is called 'weariness' or 'sadness' [skyo shas]. If one gives rise to the wish to be liberated from this weariness, then that is called 'renunciation' [nges 'byung]. Delusion is taking what is pointless to be meaningful.

If you have little weariness [skyo shas chung ba] toward saṃsāra, contemplate the defects of the three realms of saṃsāra and generate a mindset of renunciation [nges 'byung]. When you clearly see the sufferings of the beings in the six realms, weariness [skyo shas] or sadness [sems pham pa] will naturally arise in your mind, and you will naturally develop the wish to become free from the sufferings of saṃsāra. The wish to be free [bral 'dod kyi blo] from suffering is called 'renunciation' [nges 'byung]. Renunciation also includes the wish to enter into the practice of the dharma.

Die in a lonely cave [shi phugs grog stong la gtad]: Die alone in a cave, a ravine, on a mountain ridge, or other places where a genuine yogin would die. The place where a yogin dies has not been built upon; it does not require maintenance or ownership. A yogin is free from worries like, "What will happen to my body when I die? What will happen to my wealth when I die? To whom should I give my property?" No one gives anything to the yogin, and no one takes anything from him. He is completely free and independent.

The time of death is the most important moment of life, and at that time independence is crucial; any attachment or worry could spoil it. If you die surrounded by your friends and family, they will only cause distraction at the moment of death. Alone in a little retreat hut or cave, you will easily remember the instructions of your kind root guru about what to do at the moment of death. No one will be there to cause any distractions, such as doctors or relatives who fuss over your body.

Even though a yogin cannot totally leave everything behind and go to the mountains, he should still try to cut all his attachments to this life. The main point is to cut through all attachment and clinging [zhen pa dang chags pa].

When Jamyang Khyentse Wangpo visited Lhasa, he uttered an unusual aspiration before the Jowo statue, "Without any master above me, any servants below me, without friends or enemies, may I die in a remote hermitage" [yar la blon med mar la g.yog med phar ltos dgra med tshur ltos gnyen med par dben pa'i ri khrod nyid du 'chi ba shog]. Consider this the king among all aspirations.

The three vajras [rdo rje gsum]:

> Start out with the vajra of no discouragement.
> End with the vajra of no need to be ashamed (of faults).
> Live with the vajra of pure wisdom.

Start out with the vajra of no discouragement [bshol thebs med pa'i rdo rje sngon la btang]: Not being discouraged means ignoring even your father, mother, relatives or friends if they try to prevent you from practicing dharma. Even though they pressure you into worldly activities, even if they threaten your life, never lose heart. A practitioner entering into dharma practice needs that resolve and strength of mind. If your guru tries to impede your practice, that is the only occasion when you should ignore his command. Be as unchanging as a vajra in your resolve to practice dharma. Know that genuine practice will attract many obstacles, but never be discouraged. Let nothing keep you away from your practice.

Every practitioner will have moments when his mood is down, and he is not inspired to practice. Recognize these moods as a blessing of your guru. Be happy and invite them. Do not try to repress them but look at them and try to see their essence. Uninspired states will quickly vanish if you welcome them as part of your practice. Do not be discouraged by your moods. Apply the supreme techniques for enhancement and for removal of obstacles: genuine devotion to your root guru, heartfelt compassion to all sentient beings, and the recognition of buddha nature.

End with the vajra of no need to be ashamed of faults [nongs khrel med pa'i rdo rje rjes la bzhag]: Do not end up as many practitioners do, very diligent at the outset and becoming diligent business people later in their lives. They cultivate close ties with their friends and relatives and fight with their enemies, behaving worse than ordinary worldly people. They put all their effort into making money, hoarding riches and becoming famous and will die full of regret and shame.

A proverb states: "The new practitioner does not put his trust in gold. The old practitioner picks up scraps from the road." The new practitioner is very enthusiastic about the dharma, thinking, "Everything is impermanent. I might die soon. What is the use of gold, money or riches? I will give it all away." After a couple of years of practice, however, he realizes that he has not developed genuine renunciation. Feeling that his practice has not progressed, he decides to return to worldly activities. Since he

has had a lot of time to think, he is more clever and more single-minded about making money than previously. He has become a so-called 'old practitioner', who thinks, "This piece of leather by the roadside can still be used for something. I will pick it up, mend it and sell it for profit." Thus practitioners collect what even dogs would not touch.

Sadly, this happens to many practitioners. They do not progress on the path because they have not developed heartfelt renunciation [gdeng nas nges 'byung mi skye]. They do not feel revulsion toward saṃsāra ['khor ba la zhen mi log]; they do not take impermanence to heart [mi rtag pa rgyud la mi skye]. From the very beginning of dharma practice, a real practitioner needs the strong and unchanging resolve not to end up like this, a resolve unchanging as a vajra. A true practitioner does develop renunciation and revulsion, does take impermanence to heart.

Live with the vajra of pure wisdom [rnam dag ye shes rdo rje rang dang 'grogs]: The vajra of pure wisdom is nothing other than awareness wisdom [rig pa'i ye shes], the natural state of mind [sems kyi gnas lugs]. Awareness wisdom has not the slightest impurity; it is unchanging like a vajra. A genuine practitioner dedicated to recognizing awareness all the time would waste not even a moment on something else. A genuine practitioner simply sits down to practice, utterly unshakeable in his determination to attain enlightenment in this very life through the practice of recognizing awareness wisdom. Such a practitioner has no other interest. He has gained confidence in the recognition of awareness. This ends Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche's teachings on the ten jewels of the Kadampa masters

Text section 215:

The great master Tsangpa Gyare [gtsang pa rgya ras] recited and practiced the *three wrathful mantras* [drags sngags gsum] whenever he had a virtuous thought.

> Come what may.
> Wherever it leads me it is fine.
> I do not need anything but that.

Come what may [ci yongs ba shog]: Whatever happens to me or whatever may come my way does not matter. I have decided that I will practice the dharma. Everything else is no longer my concern. I cannot be dissuaded from practice by my father, mother, brothers, sisters, wife, girlfriend, children, friends or anyone else. My mind is made up. It does not matter if I become sick or even if I die. It does not matter whether or not everything in my life goes well. I will practice the dharma regardless. I will follow up on this virtuous thought that I am having now and will carry it through until I reach perfection.

Many people expect their worldly aims to manifest perfectly in their lives. At the same time they fear that something negative might occur. At no moment in their lives are they free from harboring expectations [re ba] or fears [dogs pa] about what the future might bring. However, the dharma can never be successfully practiced if one clings to

hopes and fears. A true practitioner casts away all hopes and fears and keeps on practicing, not concerned with what happens in his life. He is not elated by positve circumstances nor depressed by negative circumstances. He accepts whatever happens.

Wherever it leads me it is fine [gang ltar 'gro ba song]: I have given up all ties to saṃsāra and no longer care what happens to me. It doesn't matter where I live or whether the circumstances for practicing are perfect or not. I will just follow the dharma, wherever it leads. I don't care if I get sick while practicing. I don't even care if I die.

I don't need anything whatsoever (other than dharma) [cis kyang dgos pa med]: Besides the precious dharma, I don't need anything whatsoever. A true practitioner has no plans for his life. He has no needs except for the precious teachings. Once he has received these teachings, he devotes himself to practice alone. Such confidence comes about only when one has realized the vajra of wisdom, one's own awareness wisdom.

These teachings arise from confidence in the view [lta ba'i gdengs]. They are words of highest diligence from someone who has truly understood the preciousness of the dharma. A yogin knows that the dharma will lead to complete enlightenment and therefore does not waste time with anything else. These teachings explain the proper commitment to have when practicing the dharma [chos sgrub pa'i skabs la dam bca' ba].

Whenever you have a wholesome thought, such as the wish to practice virtue [dge ba sgrub 'dod kyi blo], remember these lines and practice them. You can even recite these three lines as a mantra while you hold on to your intention to practice and carry this resolve to its conclusion.

You should read the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra and its commentary again and again. Every time you read it and ponder its meaning, you will gain new understanding. It is not like a magazine to be read only once. This text needs to be studied repeatedly. The more you study it, the more profound and vast will your understanding become. At best, a practitioner should study this text one or two hundred times. You need to reach a state of penetration where the text and its meaning are indelibly imprinted on your mind.

From my own experience, I know that after reading this text and Khenpo Kunpal's commentary at least one hundred times, each time a new insight as sweet as molasses arises. You inevitably come to places that you do not understand or are not sure about. They will stay with you and an understanding or insight might pop up when you least expect it, maybe while eating, while taking a walk or while talking to another person. This is the only way to become a true scholar. If you have some kind of understanding on your first reading of the text and think that your initial insight is sufficient, you are really deluding yourself. One hundred times is the absolute minimum. Only then will your understanding deepen.

Text section 217:

The last subdivision dealt with the physical and mental basis for developing bodhicitta. The term 'basis' or 'support' [rten] means prerequisite or necessary condition but also has the connotation of 'dwelling place' [bzhugs sa]. The mental basis for generating bodhicitta is the mind that wishes to practice virtue [dge ba sgrub 'dod pa'i blo], the dharma. Everyone who has heard or read about the teachings of the Buddha and who thinks, "Wouldn't it be nice if I could also attain enlightenment; I should make some effort and practice the precious dharma," has the mental basis for developing bodhicitta.

Now Śāntideva explains bodhicitta, that which is based upon [brten pa] the physical and mental support. The text teaches the superiority of bodhicitta over other ordinary virtues, bodhicitta's special features [khyad chos] and qualities.

Text section 218 / stanza 6:

In the case of sentient beings like ourselves, virtuous intentions to practice the dharma are rare, short-lived and feeble, as short and weak [nyams stobs chung ba nyid] as a flash of lightning that illuminates the darkness of the night only briefly. We might think about practicing dharma, but a second later we remember to phone a friend. The virtuous thought disappears, and we are involved in a long conversation. Once again we think about practicing the dharma, but another friend comes by and persuades us to go see a movie. In this way our feeble intention to practice the dharma is easily overpowered by our mundane inclinations. Only rarely, when the right circumstances come together can we follow up on a virtuous thought and actually begin to practice.

In most cases, whenever the intention to practice dharma arises in our mind, either we ourselves or other people, like our friends, relatives and acquaintances, destroy it. From the viewpoint of bodhicitta, such friends and situations that destroy bodhicitta are considered to be bad friends [grogs ngan] and negative circumstances [yul ngan]. The moment a so-called friend comes by and invites us to have a good time, our intention to practice is destroyed. True and sincere dharma practice does not spring from an ordinary mind but from a positive frame of mind bent on virtue.

When the intention to practice is very feeble, our involvement in non-virtuous thoughts and negative deeds of body, speech and mind are very strong. We constantly engage in the ten non-virtuous actions [mi dge ba bcu]: taking life [srog gcod pa], taking what is not given [ma byin par len pa], sexual misconduct [log g.yem], speaking lies [rdzun smra ba], sowing discord [phra ma byed pa], harsh words [tshig rtsub], worthless chatter [ngag kyal], covetousness [rnab sems], wishing harm to others [gnod sems], and wrong views [log lta].

Constant involvement in non-virtuous thoughts, speech and actions builds up a tremendous power of negativity [sdig pa]. This unwholesome force throws us into the three lower realms and is very difficult to reverse. Only the precious and perfect bodhicitta has the power to overcome all this negativity and its consequences. No other ordinary virtues have the power to truly eliminate the great mass of negativity.

Only the sun that illuminates the whole world system can overcome the darkness of the night.

Ordinary virtue [dge ba phal pa] refers to the ten virtuous actions, to a positive attitude, or to any kind of virtuous action not embraced by bodhicitta. Other forms of ordinary virtue [dge ba phal pa] and merit can be worldly virtues ['jig rten pa'i dge ba] or the virtues of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas. Ordinary virtuous thoughts can easily become negative thoughts. If the mind of a practitioner is infused with bodhicitta, however, he cannot commit negative deeds. A non-virtuous thought cannot co-exist with bodhicitta. Non-virtuous thoughts cannot even enter into the mind of a practitioner who has generated bodhicitta. On the other hand, ordinary virtuous actions, such as generosity not embraced by bodhicitta, can very well be performed when one is angry.

Text sections 219-220 / stanza 7:

All the buddhas have seen that sentient beings are overwhelmed by afflictions and non-virtuous thoughts. Each buddha contemplated and searched for many countless aeons to find the perfect antidote against this negativity. None of the buddhas of the three times, however, found any method superior to bodhicitta. Bodhicitta is the perfect remedy against all non-virtuous actions, afflictions and suffering. Even if all the omniscient buddhas of the three times had a conference to discuss the most perfect method of removing the suffering of all beings, the most perfect method to carry all beings to temporary and ultimate happiness, to perfect buddhahood, they could come up with nothing superior to bodhicitta.

An *aeon* [bskal pa] is a time-span of inconceivable length, so long that it cannot be expressed or measured in years. The term 'countless' [grangs med] is the number one followed by sixty zeros.[1507]

For three countless aeons Buddha Śākyamuni sought the perfect method to overcome suffering and reach enlightenment. He saw that bodhicitta was the only method that could bring temporary and ultimate benefit and bliss to all beings. *Temporary benefit* [gnas skabs kyi phan pa] means that the practice of bodhicitta will bring about rebirth in the higher realms of saṃsāra, in the human and god realms. *Ultimate benefit* [mthar thug gi phan pa] refers to the attainment of complete enlightenment.

Bodhicitta is the supreme method for overcoming suffering for the following five reasons:

1. *It purifies negative deeds committed previously* [sngar byas kyi sdig pa 'dags pa].
2. *It disrupts the continuity of negative deeds in the future* [phyin chad kyi sdig rgyun gcod pa].

[1507] The term 'incalculable' or 'countless' [grangs med; asaṃkhya] is ten to the power of fifty-nine, see *Jewellery of Scripture*, pages 144-145; and *bu ston chos 'byung*, pages 71-72.

3. *It overcomes all afflictions in one's mind* [rang rgyud kyi nyon mongs zil gyis gnon pa].
4. *It develops even the most subtle roots of virtue* [dge ba'i rtsa ba phra mo yang gong du spel ba].
5. *Ultimately it causes (practitioners) to reach great enlightenment* [mthar thug byang chub chen po 'thob pa].

1. *It purifies negative deeds committed previously* [sngar byas kyi sdig pa 'dags pa]: The negative deeds that one has committed in former lifetimes persist as mental patterns [bag chags], mental habits within one's mind. These negative actions and habits all derive from ego-clinging. The thought, "I will free all beings from their suffering and establish them on the level of perfect buddhahood" is the opposite of all such negative mental patterns. This thought is not based on ego-clinging. The more one progresses in the realization of egolessness, the more these former negative patterns will fall apart.

   The moment genuine bodhicitta is born [byang chub sems rin po che mtshan nyid pa], inconceivable amounts of former karma are purified. One no longer need suffer the consequences of all of one's own karma. This is the incredible power of bodhicitta. Absolute bodhicitta [don dam pa'i byang chub sems] or genuine bodhicitta is realized from the first bodhisattva level onward. This realization is identical with the genuine recognition of mind nature.

2. *It disrupts the continuity of negative deeds in the future* [phyin chad kyi sdig rgyun gcod pa]: Once bodhicitta has taken birth, the practitioner will no longer commit negative deeds. For as long as bodhicitta is present in the practitioner's mind, the continuity of negative deeds is disrupted. If one has experienced a state of extreme anger, the waves of this anger linger in one's being. Even if you make friends with your former enemy, the previously generated negative energy will continue to carry through in all your actions. Once a powerful lion has roamed through an area, his strong scent lingers even long after he is gone.

   Since time without beginning, for countless lifetimes, we have generated an inconceivable force of negativity. This is what the term 'continuity of negativity' [sdig pa'i rgyun] means. Only bodhicitta can disrupt this habitual pattern [bag chags] of negativity. Even the gods that dwell on the peak of worldly existence [srid pa'i rtse mo] remain subject to the continuity of their own negative deeds. Even the most virtuous god still carries the seed of negativity [sdig pa'i sa bon] in his mind. For us ordinary beings, the ten non-virtuous actions [mi dge ba bcu] are always ready to flare up when the situation permits it. This negative force has been built up by our own negative deeds committed in former lifetimes. This force carries over into our future lifetimes. Only bodhicitta can cut through this flow of negativity.

3. *It outshines all afflictions in one's mind* [rang rgyud kyi nyon mongs zil gyis gnon pa]. A mind infused with bodhicitta does not give rise to aggression, jealousy, pride and so forth. The more one becomes accustomed to relative bodhicitta, the more afflictions are overcome. The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra teaches the methods to deal

with each of the five afflictions. In the face of absolute bodhicitta, afflictions cannot survive at all. When the sun has risen, darkness is dispersed [zil gyis gnon pa].

One might say that relative bodhicitta has the power to eradicate 75% of previously accumulated negative karma. It can cut through 75% of the continuity of negativity that lingers on into the future, and it can overcome 75% of all afflictions. Only absolute bodhicitta, however, has the power to utterly eradicate even the tiniest trace of past negative karma, to cut through the most subtle continuity of negativity, and to overcome the most subtle levels of afflictions.

It is crucial that practitioners never underestimate the power of relative bodhicitta. Relying on relative bodhicitta, practitioners will eradicate most of their previously accumulated negative karma, and they will never go astray into the peaceful nirvāṇa of the śrāvakas. Relying on absolute bodhicitta, a practitioner can utterly cut through all afflictions and thoroughly overcome saṃsāra.

4. *It develops even the most subtle roots of virtue* [dge ba'i rtsa ba phra mo yang gong du spel ba]: Whoever practices any of the six perfections, such as generosity and so forth, with the intention to liberate all beings from suffering and to establish them on the level of complete enlightenment will gain inconceivable merit. The blessing of this motivation is so strong that even the slightest virtuous action that is embraced by this wish will bring inconceivable results. Every deed embraced by bodhicitta is a virtue that never ceases [zad mi shes pa'i dge ba], one that never is exhausted.

If you embrace the activity of washing your dishes with the bodhicitta motivation, you gather boundless merit. Think, "In order to liberate all sentient beings from their suffering and establish them on the level of perfect enlightenment, I will clean these dishes. In the same way, I will purify the obscurations of body, speech and mind of all sentient beings." Embracing such a simple activity with bodhicitta generates the same amount of merit as sponsoring the construction of an entire Buddhist monastery if the donation is not embraced with bodhicitta. Such is the difference between merit embraced or not embraced with bodhicitta.

In Buddha's time, many people would come to the temple where he was staying to present offerings. The rich often presented golden butter lamps. One day, a very poor old lady brought some butter in a goat's hoof into which she had placed a wick and offered it as a butter lamp. While offering it she thought, "May this lamp dispel the darkness of ignorance of all sentient beings and may they all be illuminated through the light of wisdom." Next to her a rich man offered a big golden butter lamp with the thought, "May I have a long life and fame." Others offered golden lamps and prayed, "May I become a world monarch in my future lives."

In the evening, Maudgalyāyana, one of Buddha's main students, came to extinguish the lamps. With a flick of his hand he extinguished them one by one. When he came to the goat hoof, however, he could not put the flame out. He tried to blow the flame out but still it burned. He gathered all his breath to blow it out but still did not succeed. He thought, "This is strange. Someone is playing a

magical trick on me. I will use my own magical power to extinguish that flame." Through his magical powers, he conjured up a big wind but still could not manage to extinguish the flame. Instead the flame grew larger. Maudgalyāyana reported the incident to the Buddha and asked for an explanation. The Buddha replied, "Though the material of this lamp is not special, the thought behind this offering is very special. This lamp offering carries more merit than the merit of all you śrāvakas combined."

All students of Mahāyāna Buddhism should visualize the buddhas and bodhisattvas in the sky in front of them and repeatedly develop bodhicitta. Having developed bodhicitta, they should practice the six transcendental perfections. Among these, the most important is the transcendental perfection of wisdom. This transcendental wisdom is the view of the Great Perfection, and this view must embrace the practice of all the other five perfections. Only then are they called 'transcendental perfections'. For transcendental wisdom to arise, one needs to practice a transcendental meditation [bsam gtan]. Meditation is based on diligence [brtson 'grus], which requires an undisturbed mind [sems mi 'khrugs pa] of patience [bzod pa]. Patience requires discipline [tshul khrims]. In order to open up one's mind to all of these, one needs to practice generosity [sbyin pa]. In this manner, the six perfections permeate and support each other. In each perfection, all six must be present. They are actually six aspects of one single point.

5. *Ultimately it causes (practitioners) to reach great enlightenment* [mthar thug byang chub chen po 'thob pa]: The practice of relative [kun rdzob byang sems] and absolute bodhicitta [don dam byang sems] is the direct path to enlightenment. A practitioner should generate this confidence and trust in bodhicitta practice.

   Throughout the three times of past, present and future, countless numbers of beings have reached, are reaching, and will reach the level of unexcelled enlightenment in a swift way, without any hardship, through the practice of bodhicitta. Bodhicitta will cause every action of body, speech and mind to lead to the attainment of enlightenment. Following the Mahāyāna alone, one might reach enlightenment after three, seven, or thirty-seven incalculable aeons. If one applies the practice of bodhicitta to the methods of Vajrayāna, one might attain enlightenment in one single life or at the very most within sixteen lifetimes. The ultimate aim or focus [dmigs yul] of bodhicitta is always the attainment of complete enlightenment. If you lack bodhicitta, regardless of what dharma you practice, you will never reach complete enlightenment, buddhahood. You might reach high stages of rebirth within saṃsāra; you might even reach liberation [thar pa] from saṃsāra, but you will not reach buddhahood.

For these five great reasons, the buddhas saw that bodhicitta is the supreme method. Through bodhicitta, the buddhas of the past attained perfect enlightenment. The buddhas of the present are reaching perfect enlightenment right now through the practice of the precious bodhicitta. Moreover, the buddhas of the future will reach enlightenment only through bodhicitta.

You must understand that virtue and merit depend entirely on motivation. An action might seem to be negative, but if done with a true bodhicitta motivation, it becomes virtuous. An action might seem to be meritorious, but if done with a negative mindset, it becomes non-virtuous or non-meritorious. As it is said:

> The distinction between virtue and non-virtue must be made in regard to the motivation,
> Not in regard to the magnitude of a virtuous or negative form.
>
> kun slong dge dang mi dge'i bye brag las /
> dge sdig gzugs brnyan che chung rjes mi 'gro /

Text section 221 / stanza 8:

Some people wish to eliminate the suffering of all the realms of existence. Some wish to relieve all beings of their unhappiness. Some have the wish to establish themselves and all beings on the level of bliss. People who have such wishes must never forsake bodhicitta but must keep it constantly in their minds. A practitioner who keeps bodhicitta in mind will be able to alleviate the suffering of many people and will establish countless beings on the level of temporary and ultimate happiness. These are the benefits of keeping bodhicitta permanently in mind. Therefore, never forsake it.

The term *suffering* [sdug bsngal] refers to the three kinds of suffering: the suffering of change ['gyur ba'i sdug bsngal], suffering upon suffering [sdug bsngal gyi sdug bsgnal] and omnipresent suffering in the making [khyab pa 'du byed kyi sdug bsngal]. The suffering of change is the suffering we feel when a happy state suddenly changes into suffering. We experience suffering upon suffering when, before one suffering has ended, we are subjected to another. Omnipresent suffering in the making means that although we think things are going quite well for us at the moment, and we are not suffering much, in fact, we are totally immersed in the causes of suffering. Since everything we do is simply a concoction of negative actions, it can lead only to further rebirth and suffering. Today's happiness is actually future suffering in the making.

Specifically, human beings experience the suffering of *birth* [skye ba], the suffering of *aging* [rga ba], the suffering of *sickness* [na ba], the suffering of *death* ['chi ba], the suffering of separation from loved ones [sdug pa dang 'bral ba], the suffering of encountering what one does not want [mi 'dod pa thog tu bab pa], and the suffering of not getting what one does want ['dod pa btsal kyang ma rnyed].

Each of the six realms in the realm of desire ['dod khams] has its particular suffering. Hell beings experience the suffering of heat and cold [tsha grang]; pretas experience the suffering of hunger and thirst [bkres skom]; animals the suffering of stupidity and preying upon each other [gcig la gcig za ba]; asuras experience the suffering of fighting and quarreling ['thab rtsod]; humans experience the suffering of birth, aging, sickness and dying [skye rga na 'chi]; and the gods experience the suffering of death and transmigration ['pho ltung].

The causes of suffering [sdug bsngal gyi rgyu] are the various forms of grasping or fixation ['dzin pa]. Grasping means holding on to a personal identity [gang zag gi bdag 'dzin] and holding on to phenomenal reality [chos kyi bdag 'dzin] as well as the subtle levels of dualistic fixation [gnyis 'dzin].

The five poisonous afflictions [nyon mongs dug lnga] result from clinging to a personal identity [gang zag gi bdag 'dzin]. These afflictions are: ignorance [ma rig pa], desire ['dod chags], anger [khong khro], arrogance [nga rgyal], and jealousy [phrag dog].

When we experience these emotions arising in our minds, we identify with them and act them out in words and deeds. In fact, they have a hold over us only as long as we are holding on to or identifying ourselves with them. Grasping at these emotions is the cause for karma. Karma [las] means 'the capacity of the mind to bring forth a result' [sems 'bras bu bskyed pa'i nus pa]. In other words, understanding karma is recognizing that mind has the power to set in motion something positive, negative or neutral. Engaging in positive, neutral or negative thoughts, emotions, speech and actions develops patterns in our minds which will arise again and again and lead to the formation of new patterns. These patterns become so powerful and strong that they come to dictate our thoughts, emotions, speech and actions.

The mind is what generates thoughts and emotions. Speech and body only act according to what the mind makes them do. Developing positive patterns by living in accord with the ten virtuous actions will lead to a happy state of mind in this life and to rebirth in happy states in future lives. This law of cause and effect is called karma. Any actions of body, speech and mind that lead to a result are called karma. Actions like casually hitting a table with no emotional involvement do not lead to results and therefore are not karma. If you hit a table in anger, however, that anger will build up a pattern in your mind, and karma will be accumulated.

In this life you have inherited patterns that you yourself built up in former lifetimes. This is called 'the obscuration of karmic ripening due to former actions' [rnam smin gyi sgrib pa]. In this life your mind is constantly creating and accumulating more karma. If you seriously want to change the formation of habitual patterns, you must learn how to loosen and cut your involvement in afflictions. This is done by realizing egolessness.

The moment you identify yourself with your body, you think, "This is my body. I am this body." You are identifying yourself with your emotions and feelings when you think, "This is my feeling. I am this feeling." Likewise, you are identifying with your thoughts when you think, "This thought is my viewpoint. I am this thought." Moreover, you identify yourself with objects by thinking, "This object is mine." All these fixations are created by your mind. The mind creates the illusion of an 'ego', of an 'identity', and of 'ownership,' perpetuating from moment to moment thoughts of 'I' and 'mine'. This basic delusion is called ignorance. The deluded ego-mind reacts with like and dislike, attachment and aversion. It needs to defend and protect itself constantly. This is the Buddhist definition of 'ego.'

The dharma teaches us to understand the illusory nature of body, feelings, thoughts and phenomena, and shows us how to let go of these strong fixations. The dharma

teaches us how to recognize the enlightened essence of our own minds, which is beyond all afflictions and fixations. As long as the mind is involved in afflictions, it creates karma that always makes us fall back [zag pa] into saṃsāra. This is called 'defiling karma' or 'karma that makes one fall back (into saṃsāra)' [zag bcas kyi las].

The bodhisattvas, who have realized egolessness and engage constantly in the six transcendental actions, still experience the ripening of former karma and build up new positive karma. That karma, however, is called 'non-defiling karma' or 'karma that does not make one fall back' [zag med gyi las], since the bodhisattvas will never fall back into saṃsāra. The moment the bodhisattvas realize egolessness, they are free from gross afflictions. From the first to the seventh bodhisattva levels, however, they still retain subtle afflictive obscurations.

Only the bodhisattvas on the eight, ninth and tenth levels have truly overcome all obscurations of afflictions. Even these exalted beings have not yet overcome the subtle levels of obscurations of cognition, however. Only the completely enlightened Buddha is utterly free from all obscurations of afflictions and cognition. He no longer experiences the ripening of former karma, nor does he create any further karma. He manifests immeasurable benefit for beings through his enlightened activities, which are constant, all-pervading and spontaneously manifesting.

Grasping afflictions and identifying yourself with them pollutes and agitates your mind and causes immense difficulties and hardships. The more you learn to let go of grasping, the closer you come to your true nature, the buddha nature. This buddha nature is free from all grasping and is not tainted by obscurations of afflictions or cognition. It is free from self-centered ego-clinging. The buddha nature is endowed with all the infinite qualities of the completely enlightened Buddha. The buddha nature is wisdom, peaceful and beyond any suffering.

If you really want to learn how to let go of grasping at ego, you need direct oral instructions from your teacher in a one-on-one teaching situation. First, you should understand what is meant by 'ego' [bdag] and by 'grasping' ['dzin]. If you ask a beginner the following question, "Is a person the ego or the grasping?", most of them answer, "The ego is the person." Most people truly think that a person and the ego are identical and that the mind creates the grasping. This is a view that from the outset believes in the existence of an 'ego' or an 'I'. This is totally opposed to the Buddhist view, in which 'ego' or 'I' are just labels, mere names. 'Ego', 'I', and 'mine' are mere ideas or labels that the mind fixates upon and grasps.

Ego and ego-grasping is like believing in an enormous lie. For example, if someone makes other people believe that he is holding a diamond in his hand, this belief might cause someone to try to steal the non-existing diamond. Someone might even try to kill the person who created the illusion in order to obtain the diamond. In fact, there was never any basis for stealing or killing in the first place; the conflict was about something totally non-existent.

'Ego' is grasping at something as being real [yod par 'dzin pa]. Grasping an 'other' [gzhan la 'dzin pa] is called 'object grasping' [chos kyi bdag 'dzin], literally 'grasping at the

self of phenomena'. 'Grasping a self' [rang la 'dzin pa] is called 'subject grasping' [gang zag gi bdag 'dzin], literally 'grasping at the personal self or identity'.

When the focus of attention is directed away from oneself to the outside, toward objects and persons, it is called 'object grasping'. Focusing on one's own body, one's feelings and emotions, one's own ideas and thoughts, and assuming a position of identity and ownership is called 'subject grasping', grasping at the personal self or identity. The mere thought 'I' is subject grasping.

Thoughts like 'my concept, my thoughts, my mind, my body' operate on the assumption of an ego or self that owns or identifies with a thought or idea. No one ever examines to see whether those objects with which we constantly identify ourselves really exist. If you focus on your body, then you build up an object fixation. If you identify yourself with your body, considering it 'my body,' you have created a subject fixation. The number of objects which can be focused on and turned into objects of fixation are infinite. As soon as thoughts like 'I', 'mine', or 'that is I' arise, this becomes subject fixation.

Everything that you label to be like this or like that, real or unreal, is called object fixation. If you identify yourself with something, however, it is called subject fixation. This identification gives rise to all afflictions. If you do not identify yourself with something, if you do not think, "that is I," then attachment and aversion, pride and jealousy cannot arise. You develop likes and dislikes only when you hold on to the idea of an 'I'. The ego always gives priority to itself and always holds others as second. The ego reacts with attachment to likes, with aversion to dislikes, and with ignorance to things and situations it cannot understand or is not aware of.

When the position of an 'I' is built up, the 'other' is defined automatically. When the duality of self and others is created, likes and dislikes, attachment and aversion are also created. This is the basis from which all afflictions arise. Strong fixation on these afflictions leads to the accumulation of karma.

Fixation ['dzin pa] is saṃsāra, and fixation is what makes you a sentient being. Without fixations, saṃsāra does not exist. If you know how to sever or liberate your fixations, how to free yourself from them, then you are liberated from saṃsāra. Once you are utterly free from fixations, you are no longer a sentient being—you have become a buddha. Fixation means 'holding tight' [dam po] and is the opposite of being relaxed. When you believe in an 'identity' and hold on to it, dualistic mind is created.

On the ultimate level, your mind is by nature free from fixations ['dzin med], primordially free [ye grol]. Since your mind is by nature free from fixations, any fixation that is built up does not accord with the natural state of the mind and is, therefore, untrue [bden med].

Ego-grasping is rooted in ignorance and arises from not knowing the natural state. All sentient beings suffer from this ignorance and grasp an identity which does not, in fact, exist. Holding on to something that does not exist is delusion. Based on the ignorance of not realizing the natural state of your mind, the belief in an 'I' and in an 'identity' is possible. Not being aware of the natural state of your mind because you do

not recognize awareness wisdom [rig pa'i ye shes], from moment to moment you create and perpetuate the illusion of an ego, of subject and object. Living in this illusion, both ego and a dichotomy of subject and object appear to be real [yod snang du shar].

Once you have truly established that ego and identity do not exist, you will fully understand that ego-grasping is a delusion, a mistaken state of mind, a state of ignorance. Holding on to the idea that the ego is real when it does not even exist [med pa la yod par 'dzin pa] is a complete delusion. This delusion is temporary, however, not primordial. It is not the natural state of your mind. The natural state of the mind is primordially free from any fixation.

As a beginner you must first search for the ego. Since you believe in the existence of an ego, you should be able to find it. However, when you minutely examine every part in your body, you will discover no place where your ego resides. Search your feelings and emotions in the same way. In which feeling does your ego or identity exist? Where does the ego stay? Next, search for the ego in your thoughts, concepts and ideas. Finally, search for the ego in the mind itself. Is the ego your momentary mind? If yes, where is it? What does it look like? Through this examination you will understand that there is no ego to be found in your present mind, nor in your past or future mind. When you look at your own mind's grasping, you discover that there is actually no subject grasping and no object to be grasped.

As you begin the meditations of the first of the five paths, the path of accumulation [tshogs lam], you will practice the four applications of mindfulness [dran pa nyer bzhag bzhi],[1508] analyzing with mindfulness your body [lus], your feelings [tshor ba], your mind [sems], and all phenomena [chos]. Through that practice you will establish the absence of self in phenomena as well as the absence of an individual or personal self. You will understand that the belief in an ego or an identity is only a very strong delusion.

Some people's ego-grasping is so strong that they never will doubt its reality. They experience their identity and the reality of their ordinary perception so concretely that they would never doubt it. This indicates a person with very little merit. As the Indian Master Āryadeva said, "Those of minor merit will not even be able to have any doubts about it."

Grasping ego leads to the rise of afflictions. If you feel threatened in your position or hurt in your feelings, you will react with aggression. The feeling of anger flares up, and you identify yourself with this anger, directing it toward another person. When that happens, turn your attention away from the object of your anger and look toward your mind. Look into your anger, into your feeling of hurt, and search for the ego that

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[1508] This practice will greatly advance while being on the lesser path of accumulation [tshogs lam ngung ngu]. Great diligence in the practice of the four correct endeavors [yang dag spong ba bzhi] will occur on the medium path of accumulation [tshogs lam 'bring po]. On the greater path of accumulation [tshogs lam chen po] the practice of the four legs of miracles [rdzu 'phrul gyi rkang pa bzhi] will occur. See *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. II.*, pages 143-144.

has caused this emotional turmoil to arise. Ask yourself, "Who am I?" Search for your ego at that time. Look for your identity. Find your 'I' and your 'identity'. Look at the one who is taking up this defensive or aggressive posture. Through this practice of searching for the ego you will soundly establish the knowledge of the non-existence of a personal identity [gang zag gi bdag med].

Later you will learn how to look into the mind itself, how to look at the one who experiences the emotions, the one who thinks the thoughts. Through that kind of introspection you will establish the knowledge of the non-existence of a self in all phenomena [chos kyi bdag med]. For this you should seek a qualified master of the Great Perfection and request the teaching called the 'pointing-out instruction'.

The śrāvakas believe that objects have a real basis as very tiny indivisible particles or atoms [bzung ba rdul phran cha med]. The pratyekabuddhas believe that the mind consists in moments of consciousness. These beliefs hold on to the idea that mind exists as very subtle moments of grasping ['dzin pa skad cig cha med], and that objects exist as very subtle atoms. With such views, both the śrāvakas and the pratyekabuddhas have established the non-existence of a personal self. For them, afflictions can no longer arise. However, neither has overcome cognitive obscurations at all. They believe that the moments of consciousness are needed, since without them no one would exist who could attain the level of an arhat or a pratyekabuddha. What the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas call wisdom is the knowledge of the present moment. They believe that wisdom is impermanent because it only exists from moment to moment. They think that is the final truth of the path.

Text sections 222-223 / stanza 9:

This stanza shows how bodhicitta brings about a change in the individual. The very moment bodhicitta is born in your mind, you become a bodhisattva, a child of the sugatas. It does not matter if you have a male or female body, if you are old or young, or whether you come from a good or bad family [rigs bzang ngan]. Family refers here to the four great castes [rigs chen po bzhi]: the royal caste [rgyal rigs; skr. kṣatriya], the brahmin caste [bram ze'i rigs; skr. brāhmaṇa], the minister caste [rje rigs; skr. vāiṣya], and the menial caste [dmangs rigs; skr. śūdra].

The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra was written in the 8th century at the Buddhist university of Nālandā by the Indian master and monk Śāntideva. The audience at Nālandā consisted exclusively of male scholars and monks. Male lay people were allowed to study at the university. Female visitors were only allowed to speak to monks and students in the monastery corridor, after which they would have to leave. Nuns were also not allowed into the monastery. Thus, the language of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra particularly addresses a male audience. This situation was exacerbated in Tibet, since the lineage of the bhikṣuni vows was never brought into the country. This meant that Buddhist scholasticism in Tibet took place exclusively among male scholars and monks, and the Tibetan commentaries on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra were, therefore, clearly written for a male audience. That is why Khenpo Kunpal's

commentary often uses the specific phrase 'the sons of the sugatas' [bde gshegs kyi sras po], which cannot correctly be translated as 'children of the sugatas'.

Nevertheless, bodhicitta is absolutely not gender biased. No difference exists between a male and a female bodhisattva, between the sons [sras po] and the daughters [sras mo] of the sugatas. Once bodhicitta is born, then that person is a child of the sugatas. Paltrül Rinpoche greatly contributed to the explanation lineage of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra not only by spreading its teaching to monastic and scholastic circles in Tibet, but also by bringing the text and its practice to large audiences of lay people.

A bodhisattva [byang chub sems dpa'] is a 'hero of mind' [sems dpa'], not a 'hero in body' [lus po dpa' bo]. The terms 'coward' ['dar ma] and 'hero' always refer to a person's mind. The heroic mind of a bodhisattva aspires to free all sentient beings from their suffering and to establish them on the level of complete enlightenment.

Relative bodhicitta, bodhicitta of aspiration and bodhicitta of application, may be born naturally in a person's mind due to extraordinary merit from former lifetimes. It may also be born the moment one receives the bodhisattva precepts. This does not depend on family background [rigs] or on gender. The belief that spiritual qualities derive from a person's birth or caste is not found in Buddhist teachings but derives from the religion of the Brahmins.

A distinction exists between an 'ordinary being bodhisattva' [so so'i skye bo byang chub sems dpa'] and an 'exalted being bodhisattva' ['phags pa byang chub sems dpa']. *The very instant* [skad cig de nyid nas] relative bodhicitta is born in the mind of an ordinary person, that person is called an 'ordinary being bodhisattva', having become a bodhisattva, a child of the sugatas. Since bodhicitta has taken birth in his mind, his name or title is transformed, and that person is henceforth called a bodhisattva. While previously his mind was exclusively engaged with ordinary thoughts, the precious bodhicitta has now been newly born in his mind. Previously, the person might have been completely imprisoned in saṃsāra, controlled by karma [las] and afflictions [nyon mongs pa], and tormented by the three kinds of suffering [sdug bsngal rnam pa gsum]. The very instant bodhicitta is born in someone's mind, however, he becomes a child of the sugatas [bde bar gshegs pa rnams kyi sras]. That is the transformation in name.

As a bodhisattva, the person has become an object worthy of the respect and veneration of all gods such as Brahma, Indra and so on, and also of all human beings like kings, dignitaries, ministers and so forth. Generally, people are worthy of veneration and respect if they have special qualities. Paying respect merely out of fear is not true respect. We should pay respect to those who have good qualities in body, speech or mind. The most eminent and noble quality in a person's mind is the precious bodhicitta. Therefore, everyone whose mind is imbued with relative bodhicitta is worthy of respect and veneration. Even the buddhas will honor a bodhisattva in whose mind bodhicitta has been born, because bodhicitta is itself the teacher of all buddhas. That is the transformation in meaning. The birth of relative bodhicitta, endowed with compassion and knowledge, in itself is enough to bring about a transformation in name and meaning.

Without bodhicitta, enlightenment is impossible. The path to enlightenment, the path to becoming a buddha, begins with the birth of bodhicitta in a person's mind. Only then will that person be able to traverse the five paths [lam lnga] and ten levels [sa bcu]. The spiritual history of Buddha Śākyamuni began the very instant he developed bodhicitta for the first time. From that time onward he continued gathering the accumulations of merit and wisdom for three incalculable aeons until finally attaining supreme enlightenment in Bodhgaya.

The distinction between an 'ordinary being bodhisattva' and a 'noble being bodhisattva' is similar to the distinction between ordinary beings and noble beings; it depends on one's progress along the five paths [lam lnga]. These are the path of accumulation [tshogs lam], the path of application [sbyor lam], the path of seeing [mthon lam], the path of meditation [sgom lam], and the path of no more learning [mi slob pa'i lam]. The first four are subsumed as the path of learning [slob pa'i lam].

In the Hīnayāna tradition, someone who has attained the path of no more learning [mi slob pa'i lam] has become either an arhat or a pratyekabuddha. A completely enlightened buddha is also someone who has attained the path of no more learning but to a higher degree. Arhats, pratyekabuddhas and buddhas are the 'true owners of gifts' ['khor gyi bdag po], monastic property and donations, and worthy objects of offerings. Those who have attained the path of seeing and the path of meditation, such as stream-enterers [rgyun du zhugs pa], once-returners [phyir 'ong ba], and non-returners [phyir mi 'ong ba], are also considered noble beings.

In the Mahāyāna tradition, the path of no more learning refers only to the Buddha, while the path of learning refers to the bodhisattvas from the first to the tenth bodhisattva level. From the path of seeing onward, a bodhisattva is considered a noble being. Once absolute bodhicitta is born in the mind of a bodhisattva, the path of seeing, the first bodhisattva level, is attained.

All beings who have attained one of the levels mentioned above are considered to be noble beings or exalted persons. These beings form the 'noble saṃgha' ['phags pa'i dge 'dun], the realized community of Buddha's followers. Saṃgha is a term for a person whose mind at all times joyfully focuses on the dharma. Someone whose mind is separated from virtue is not a member of the saṃgha. A minimum of four fully ordained monks [dge slong] or nuns [dge slong ma] constitute the saṃgha, the community of the fully ordained. As long as they have not reached the path of seeing, however, they are still considered to be the ordinary saṃgha.

All those who are still on the path of accumulation [tshogs lam] and the path of application [sbyor lam] are considered ordinary beings [so so'i skye bo]. These include those who follow the tradition of reading, studying and reflecting on the teachings [klog pa thos bsam gyi 'khor lo], those who follow the tradition of practicing meditation in solitude [spong ba bsam gtan gyi 'khor lo], and those who follow the tradition of working for the dharma [bya ba las kyi 'khor lo].

A beginner is able to develop relative bodhicitta. The qualities of relative bodhicitta are explained in the first chapter of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. Once relative bodhicitta

is born in your mind, you will clearly know it for yourself. The nature of bodhicitta is knowledge [shes rab], and, therefore, you can be aware of whether or not you have bodhicitta. You know very well whether or not you can read. In the same way, you will know whether or not you have relative bodhicitta in your mind.

The instant relative bodhicitta is born in your mind, you become an 'ordinary being bodhisattva' [so so skye bo byang chub sems dpa']. Only when you realize the wisdom of egolessness, ultimate bodhicitta, will you become a 'noble being bodhisattva' ['phags pa byang chub sems dpa']. Whoever has bodhicitta is called a bodhisattva. But you are only a bodhisattva as long as bodhicitta is present in your mind. When you forget about bodhicitta and become involved with the five mind poisons, you are no longer a bodhisattva. As a beginner, you might remember and practice bodhicitta only for five minutes. For exactly that period of practice when bodhicitta is in your mind are you a bodhisattva in meaning and name. For as long as the thought, "May I free all beings from their suffering and establish them on the level of perfect enlightenment" is in your mind, for just that period of time, do you have bodhicitta of aspiration [smon pa byang chub sems].

Bodhicitta of aspiration lasts only as long as you keep it in your mind. Bodhicitta of application ['jug pa byang chub sems], however, lasts from the beginning of a task [bya ba gcig] you have undertaken until it is completed. This is called 'the time-span it takes to complete an action' [bya rdzogs skad cig ma]. The task of a bodhisattva is to liberate all sentient beings from suffering and to establish them on the level of complete enlightenment. The period of time from the moment a bodhisattva undertakes this task until it is completed is also refered to as 'the time-span it takes to complete an action'. Understand that since there is no end to the suffering of beings, and since all sentient beings will never attain enlightenment, this time-span is never ending. Thus, the task of a bodhisattva is an unending task.

By definition, bodhicitta of application requires that you imagine or think of a task [bya ba gcig la dmigs pa] and commit yourself to its completion. All daily tasks that you, as an ordinary being bodhisattva, engage in must be undertaken for the purpose of freeing all beings from suffering and establishing them on the level of complete enlightenment. The moment you begin any ordinary activity, inmmediately join it with the commitment that you will undertake this specific task in order to free all beings from their suffering and to establish them on the level of complete enlightenment. From that very moment onward, until all sentient beings have actually reached enlightenment, [dus 'dis nas bzung ste sangs rgyas kyi go 'phang ma thob gyi bar du], the virtuous force of bodhicitta of application will remain.

You embrace ordinary activities, such as giving food to a beggar, with the commitment to the unending task of freeing all sentient beings from suffering and establishing them on the level of complete enlightenment. Since you are joining a relatively small virtue with the unending virtue of freeing all beings and establishing them on the level of enlightenment, the virtue of your giving food to the beggar will never be exhausted. If you embrace all daily activities with bodhicitta in this way, then

the stream of merit of bodhicitta of application will not be interrupted, even when you are asleep or temporarily distracted.

Even the most mundane of all activities, such as washing dishes, can be consciously embraced with bodhicitta. While washing dishes generate the motivation, "Just as I am cleaning these dishes, so will I purify the obscurations of all sentient beings in order that they may be freed from suffering and established on the level of complete enlightenment." In this manner, bodhicitta is the magical twist that renders virtuous every activity you undertake.

For beginners, directly generating bodhicitta of application is difficult because they might lack the courage to make such a vast commitment. The mere fact that a beginner has the good fortune to generate bodhicitta of aspiration, thereby transforming himself from an ordinary being into an 'ordinary being bodhisattva', is in itself utterly marvelous and amazing.

Khenpo Kunpal defines the term bodhisattva in text section 144 as: "In order to attain this (bodhi), the (bodhisattva) is courageous, since his mind does not shy away from conduct that is difficult to do, such as sacrificing his head and limbs to others. Therefore, he is a satva, a 'hero'. Furthermore, he defines the term in text section 158: "Bodhisattva means a hero whose mind does not shy away from accomplishing enlightenment through developing supreme bodhicitta as the motivation and through endeavoring in the practice of the six transcendental perfections as the application."

A bodhisattva does not shy away from the enormity of the task he has undertaken nor from the immeasurable time-span of aeons [dus bskal ba'i yun] throughout which his commitment will continue. He is not intimidated by the commitment to continuously benefit beings for endless times [dus mtha' med pa] to come. Nor does he fear the infinite number of sentient beings ['gro ba mang po'i mtha']. Moreover, he also does not avoid tasks difficult to carry out [bya dka' ba'i las], such as sacrificing his body many times over. As he is committed to infinite time, infinite beings, and infinite hardships, the virtues that he accumulates will also last infinitely.

As a beginner you need to apply mindfulness [rtsol bcas kyi dran pa] with effort and constantly remind yourself to infuse all your activities with bodhicitta. Until bodhicitta is constantly present in your mind, you must make conscious efforts to generate it over and over again. Since time without beginning until this present moment your mind has been constantly involved with egotistic motivations, aims and reactions. Egotistic responses to any given situation come naturally to you. From now on, you must constantly train yourself until your entire attitude and motivation is infused with bodhicitta, until all your natural responses aim to benefit others. Eventually, you will gain effortless mindfulness [rtsol med gyi dran pa] in your bodhicitta practice. Practice both bodhicitta of aspiration and application without interruption. Then the stream of merit of bodhicitta of application will not be interrupted, even when you are asleep or temporarily distracted.

If you want to become a meditator in the practice lineage of Tibetan Buddhism, then you should first generate the bodhicitta motivation. A beginner in the practice lineage

does not need to know and study many texts and rituals. He should not waste any time before beginning the practice of constant mindfulness with regard to bodhicitta. Once bodhicitta is implanted in a practitioner's mind, whatever meditation he embarks upon will be successful.

A bodhisattva who has reached the first bodhisattva level, one who has realization of egolessness [bdag med rtogs pa'i shes rab], can actually [dngos su] or directly [thad kar] help sentient beings. On that level the bodhisattva knows through his higher perceptions [mngon shes] the capacity [dbang po] and disposition [khams] of other beings to some extent. Therefore, he knows exactly what and how to teach. Bodhisattvas who have not reached the first bodhisattva level have only a limited range of benefiting other beings directly.

Without having higher perceptions it is difficult to give the exact teachings a particular person requires, because a bodhisattva who lacks such perceptions cannot know the minds [blo], capacities [dbang po] and latent tendencies [bag la nyal ba] of even one single person. When such a bodhisattva teaches the dharma, he assumes the role of a general physician. He can benefit to some extent, but for accurate diagnosis and treatment he must refer the patients to a specialist. An ordinary being bodhisattva might teach one hundred people but actually benefit only one.

A great Dzogchen master from East Tibet, Adzom Drugpa Rinpoche, had great realization but taught only one person at a time. He knew that each person needs a different teaching. Therefore, he never gave public teachings. Adzom Drugpa's son, Se Angyur Rinpoche [sras a 'gyur], also followed that tradition. Spending all of his time in retreat, he allocated two hours every afternoon for his students to meet him. He would have his retreat pole, called the 'standard of the kings' [rgyal tho], lowered as a sign that he was available. His students lined up outside his door, and each had the oppurtunity to receive personal meditation instructions from Se Angyur Rinpoche.

Since bodhicitta is very feeble in a beginner's mind, a beginner should always rely on spiritual guides and masters who instruct how to develop relative and absolute bodhicitta. A beginner needs to learn how to practice the six transcendental perfections. As we do damage our bodhisattva precepts, we should take the precepts every day and make heartfelt confessions. For this purpose, some masters from the Longchen Nyingthig lineage, following Paltrül Rinpoche's tradition, arranged a 'liturgy for taking the bodhisattva precepts'.[1509] This small text contains the necessary liturgy for daily practice to keep one's bodhisattva precepts intact. Only when the first bodhisattva level has been attained will bodhicitta remain permanently.

If you want to quickly attain the first bodhisattva level, rely on a qualified teacher and practice bodhicitta. Study the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra and learn the bodhisattva path. Learn how to meditate on a personal meditation deity [lhag pa'i lha], such as Buddha Śākyamuni, Mañjuśrī or any deity to whom you feel devotion. Receive the oral

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[1509] See *byang sdom blang chog*.

instructions of how to recognize your mind nature from a master of the Dzogchen lineage.

The term capacity [dbang po] refers to the possession of five capacities [dbang po lnga]: the capacity of faith [dad pa'i dbang po], the capacity of diligence [brtson 'grus kyi dbang po], the capacity of recollection [dran pa'i dbang po], the capacity of meditation [ting nge 'dzin gyi dbang po], and the capacity of knowledge [shes rab kyi dbang po]. A practitioner of high capacity [dbang po yang rab] has developed all of these five capacities. If you want to increase your capacities, you must generate considerable virtue and merit. That is why even bodhisattvas who have reached the first level continue to generate merit through the practice of the seven branches [yan lag bdun pa], which includes confession [gshags pa]. Once the first level is reached, bodhisattvas are never separated from bodhicitta but still must continue to increase their capacities.

Some people who practiced the bodhisattva path in former lifetimes might develop bodhicitta naturally as a 'residual karma' [las 'phro] from their former lives. Another cause for the birth of bodhicitta is reliance on a spiritual teacher [dge ba'i bshes gnyen]. Bodhicitta can also arise through the intensive study of Buddhist texts. Some practitioners are able to give rise to bodhicitta through their practice of gathering merit [bsod nams bsags pa]. For others, practicing loving kindness and compassion can lead to the birth of bodhicitta, loving kindness [byams pa / brtse ba] and compassion [snying rje] being like the parents of bodhicitta.

Bodhicitta is a very powerful thought. If you can truly maintain this thought from the bottom of your heart when someone is angry and shouting at you, he will very quickly cool down and become peaceful. Angry people and vicious demons cannot maintain their anger toward someone who truly practices bodhicitta. This is bodhicitta's power. Because bodhicitta is the best of all wishes, it can overcome any evil thought. A practitioner who has truly committed to bodhicitta has the power to pacify anger in other people's minds. Bodhicitta renders powerless other people's anger.

In order to truly transform one's character, one needs to know that all sentient beings are endowed with 'primordial buddhahood' [ye sangs rgyas pa]. The essence of all beings [ngo bo nyid] is the perfect buddha nature, endowed with wisdom, kindness and compassion. Due to that primordial condition, all beings have the possibility to attain enlightenment. Whoever practices the dharma has the opportunity [go skabs] to become a buddha. A beginner must remember this and receive strength from that primordial goodness. The beginner should think, "I am endowed with the buddha nature. I am able to actualize this enlightened potential through dharma practice. I can do it." Generate this confidence repeatedly. You can only generate bodhicitta if you are confident [dpa' dengs] that you can reach enlightenment.

Text sections 225-226 / stanza 10:

In ancient India the science of alchemy [gser 'gyur rig pa] apparently actually succeeded in transforming ordinary metal into gold by applying various chemical substances called 'alchemic elixirs' [gser 'gyur gyi rtsi]. Śāntideva uses the example [dpe] of the

'elixir of alchemy' to illustrate [dpe can] bodhicitta. The function [mtshungs chos / 'dra ba'i chos] of bodhicitta is to transform something negative, or 'base' in alchemical terminology, into something noble. This example shows that bodhicitta has the unique capacity and power to transform ordinary sentient beings into bodhisattvas and buddhas. Bodhicitta can make us enlightened.

Mipham Rinpoche himself is said to have once manufactured an alchemical elixir that could transform iron into gold. This elixir is said to have existed in low, medium and high potencies. The text here mentions the most potent kind of alchemical elixir, one so strong that a single ounce could transform a thousand ounces of iron into gold. Śāntideva compares bodhicitta with this most potent alchemical elixir.

Our body contains all sorts of impure substances such as urine, excrement, blood, pus and so forth. The śrāvakas in the Hīnayāna system, therefore, strive to abandon attachment to this impure body. They meditate dispassionately on the thirty-six *impure substances* that the human body [lus la yod pa'i mi gtsang ba'i rdzas so drug] contains in order to overcome their attachment to the physical body:[1510]

1) hair [skra], 2) facial hair [kha spu], 3) teeth [so], 4) (finger and toe) nails [sen mo], 5) excrement [phyi sa], 6) urine [gcin], 7) sweat [rngul], 8) nasal mucus [ngar snabs], 9) tears [mchi ma], 10) saliva [mchil ma], 11) discharge (from eyes, ears and teeth such as tooth plaque) [dri ma], 12) skin [spags pa], 13) flesh [sha], 14) blood [khrag], 15) bones [rus pa], 16) body fat [tshil], 17) marrow [rkang], 18) nerves [rtsa], 19) tendons [rgyus pa], 20) lungs [glo ba], 21) heart [snying], 22) liver [mchin pa], 23) spleen [mcher ba], 24) kidneys [mkhal ma], 25) stomach [pho ba], 26) small intestine [rgyu ma], 27) large intestine [long ga], 28) colon [gnye ma], 29) urinary bladder [lgang ba], 30) body oil [zhag], 31) lymph [chu ser], 32) pus [rnag], 33) phlegm [bad kan], 34) bile [mkhris pa], 35) brain [klad pa], and 36) brain fluid [klad rgyas].

Śrāvakas consider the physical body to be the fruition of the truth of suffering [sdug bsngal bden pa'i 'bras bu] and strive to disrupt the cycle of rebirth. They believe that once they have discarded this body and have freed themselves from the chain of rebirth, they have attained the state of happiness. They regard the body as dangerous as a poisonous snake [sbrul dug pa can] because of the attachment it leads to.

Bodhisattvas in the Mahāyāna system consider the physical body, once the mind-stream has been imbued with bodhicitta, to be precious and priceless. They vow to utilize the human body throughout many lifetimes to benefit others. For three countless aeons [bskal pa grangs med gsum] they will continue gathering the accumulations of merit and wisdom, meditating on bodhicitta and training in bodhisattva conduct.

Bodhisattvas aspire to transform their impure bodies into buddha bodies, endowed with the thirty-two major marks and eighty minor signs of an enlightened being. You should understand that attaining a buddha's body means you attain a buddha's

1510 *mi pham mkhas 'jug*, page 249

enlightened speech and mind as well, since Buddha's body, speech and mind are inseparable. As Buddha is one single wisdom [ye shes gcig], absolutely no distinction can be made between a buddha's body, speech and mind. A buddha's body can perceive everything that exists and occurs throughout the three times. This perception of the Buddha is a special feature of Mahāyāna doctrine.

Beginners may find it very difficult to understand that the Buddha is only wisdom, and they may not know how to practice and realize that wisdom. To make it easy for sentient beings, Buddha manifested the nirmāṇakāya. People could meet him, talk to him, receive teachings and begin to practice the path. This level of interacting with the Buddha is called the 'preliminary meaning' [drang don], which gradually leads a beginner to the 'ultimate meaning' [nges don], the realization of buddha nature. All the relative teachings have a single goal: to teach practitioners how to let go of fixations and thereby realize buddha nature.

In actuality, Buddha is a wisdom body, beyond time and distance. The wisdom body of the Buddha is constant [rtag pa], since immeasurable time has no self-nature; his wisdom body is all-pervasive [khyab pa], since immeasurable dimensions have no self-nature. Since his wisdom body is beyond atoms and instants, beyond matter and time, it is possible for all atoms of all world systems to fit into a single atom and for all aeons to fit into a single second.

The activities of the Buddha's three kayas manifest unceasingly through the Buddha's blessings. Therefore, a practitioner should generate irreversible faith in the qualities of the Buddha. The ultimate refuge [nges pa don gyi skyabs 'gro ba] is to understand that the equanimity and timelessness of all phenomenal manifestations throughout the ten directions and three times are inseparable from the wisdom body of all the buddhas.

In other words, the Buddha's timeless wisdom body is the ultimate object of refuge. The Buddha's wisdom body is beyond the reach of thoughts and concepts. The wisdom body can never be realized through an analytical approach. Moreover, Buddha's wisdom body is identical with the buddha nature of each sentient being. By recognizing your own buddha nature, you are realizing the wisdom body of the Buddha. That recognition is called recognizing the dharmakāya of the Buddha. Recognizing the dharmakāya wisdom of the Buddha is the same as recognizing the essence of your own mind. The Buddha himself is the dharmakāya, and the dharmakāya is the Buddha. The genuine yogin and yogini, who want to see the real Buddha, must recognize the natural state, the essence of their own minds.

The followers of the Hīnayāna path state that Buddha's body was simply that of an ordinary person, the son of king Śuddodana, and that only his mind was enlightened. Mahāyāna tradition understands the Buddha to be one single wisdom, the inseparability of body, speech and mind.

This unity of enlightened body, speech and mind can be achieved if you train in bodhicitta in each future lifetime until attaining enlightenment. To accomplish this aim, you must firmly maintain bodhicitta at all times. Following your teacher's instructions on bodhicitta, you must learn what to do and what to avoid. You learn

how to develop, protect and increase bodhicitta as well as how to apply it in daily life. The precious bodhicitta is what enables us to reach enlightenment.

Therefore, we pay homage to any being who has developed bodhicitta. The true reason why Buddhists prostrate to the Buddha is because the Buddha fully unfolded bodhicitta. They do not prostrate to the famous son of a king who lived long ago in India. If the Buddha had lacked bodhicitta, we would have absolutely no reason to offer respect and prostrations to him.

When Milarepa was an ordinary person, no one would have dreamed of prostrating to him. But after he attained realization, he could transmit his blessings to other people. This transformation of Milarepa from an ordinary being into a great saint was solely accomplished by precious bodhicitta combined with the oral instructions of his guru.

This tenth stanza of the first chapter of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra teaches bodhicitta's transformative quality through the metaphor of alchemical elixir. The base metal of the impure physical body is transformed into the pure gold of the Buddha's enlightened body. Bodhicitta has the power to transform even ordinary things like clothing into sacred objects. When a great master wears his robes, they are infused with the blessings of bodhicitta and thus become sacred objects worthy of veneration. In this way bodhicitta renders everything that comes in contact with it into something sacred.

If someone owns the alchemical elixir that transforms iron into gold he will naturally guard it well. Bodhicitta has the power to transform us ordinary beings into perfectly enlightened buddhas endowed with the enlightened body, speech and mind. Although it does not seem greatly impressive when you start to practice it, bodhicitta is the actual Buddha and, therefore, must be guarded and practiced well.

Bodhicitta transforms this impure body into a buddha's body, endowed with the thirty-two major marks and the eighty minor signs. It transforms our deluded speech into a buddha's speech, endowed with sixty aspects. It transforms our deluded mind into a buddha's wisdom mind, endowed with inconceivable qualities. Bodhicitta is precious because it makes us attain buddhahood. Since buddhahood is the most precious attainment of all, bodhicitta is equally precious. Therefore, keep it always in your mind.

The term *impediments of worldly existence and peace* [srid zhi'i rgud pa] refers to defilements or impediments [rgud pa] of both saṃsāra ['khor ba] and nirvāṇa [mya ngan las 'das pa]. Bodhicitta transforms our ordinary body into the body of the Buddha, which is beyond the impediments of saṃsāra, the three realms of existence [srid pa khams gsum 'khor ba'i rgud pa]. The defilements or impediments of saṃsāra are the three types of suffering [sdug bngal rnam pa gsum]. This is the state of us ordinary sentient beings.

The body of the Buddha is also free from the defilements or impediments of peace and nirvāṇa [zhi ba mya ngan las 'das pa'i rgud pa]. Impediments of peace and nirvāṇa is the inability to benefit others [gzhan don byed mi nus pa]. This is the state of the śrāvaka arhats and pratyekabuddha arhats. They have achieved peace from saṃsāra's

suffering, but from their state of nirvāṇa they cannot benefit other beings. This impediment of peace [zhi ba'i rgud pa] means that they have fallen into the extreme of abiding in cessation ['gog pa'i gnas su mtha' gcig tu lhung ba]. Śrāvaka arhats and pratyekabuddha arhats are impeded in their own benefit, since they could not reach buddhahood [sangs rgyas thob mi nus pa rang don gyi rgud pa]. They are also impeded in benefiting others, since they cannot help other beings [gzhan don byed mi nus pa gzhan don gyi rgud pa].

The state of cessation for a śrāvaka arhat and a pratyekabuddha arhat has a time-span. They might stay for one hundred aeons in such a state of cessation. The time-span of cessation depends on the power of their samadhi. When they wake up from such a state, they have the power to directly re-enter the same state, but they still have these two impediments or defilements. They have not reached enlightenment yet, and they cannnot help others in that state of cessation. They will never fall back into saṃsāra, but even if they stay forever in that state, they will never reach enlightenment through it. Eventually, they must embark upon the Mahāyāna path and journey to complete enlightenment.

Therefore, as a beginner, avoid the Hīnayāna approach, and from the very start of your dharma practice generate the bodhicitta motivation. Make the firm promise [dam bca' ba] to yourself that you will always keep the precious bodhicitta, the very core of the Mahāyāna path. Reflect again and again about the great benefits of bodhicitta until you can no longer live without it. Read this first chapter of Khenpo Kunpal's commentary over and over until the earnest wish to adopt bodhicitta arises in your mind.

Text section 227 / stanza 11:

In ancient times, merchants traveled to remote islands to search for precious jewels under the skillful leadership of a knowledgeable guide, who led them to the right places and knew how to examine the stones. Jewels examined by such a guide were considered the finest jewels.

Following this example, the most skillful of all guides is the Buddha, who throughout countless aeons has examined teachings to discover which will lead beings from suffering to liberation and to the level of buddhahood. Buddha is the Sole Guide of beings because only a single [gcig pu] Buddha appears in this world at one time. Buddha is the only one who can teach the path to complete enlightenment. Even the supreme bodhisattvas need to rely on the Buddha as their teacher. Among all teachers who show the path to enlightenment, Buddha is supreme, and only he can reveal the complete path to enlightenment in its entirety.

With a *mind* [blo] endowed with *immeasurable wisdom* [tshad med pa'i ye shes] and immeasurable compassion [tshad med pa'i snying rje] Buddha has, for countless aeons, examined every possible path, every possible method, every possible meditation technique, searching for the path to enlightenment. In that way he discovered that bodhicitta is the only path to overcome suffering and achieve enlightenment.

Examining bodhicitta closely, he discovered that there is nothing in this world superior to it. He discovered that the relative [kun rdzob] and the absolute bodhicitta [don dam gyi sems bskyed] include all dharmas and that consequently, all who wish to be free from saṃsāric states should firmly hold on to this precious bodhicitta.

From among all sublime teachings [dam pa'i chos kun las] means from all the teachings of the Buddha, including those that do not teach bodhicitta. Among all of these, the Buddha found bodhicitta to be the only true path to achieve liberation and perfect enlightenment. Therefore, we should trust in the Buddha and firmly take hold of bodhicitta, just like merchants trust in the jewels identified by a skillful guide.

The beginning, main part and conclusion [sbyor dngos rjes gsum] are called the 'three-fold excellence' [dam pa rnam pa gsum]: the excellent beginning, bodhicitta [sbyor ba sems bskyed dam pa]; the excellent main part, non-conceptual practice [dngos gzhi dmigs med dam pa]; and the excellent conclusion, dedication [mjug bsngo ba dam pa].

The excellent beginning of every practice should be the precious bodhicitta. Take the bodhisattva precepts every day, and then do all your practices while maintaining bodhicitta. For instance, if you offer prostrations, do this with the motivation to free all beings from suffering and to establish them on the level of complete enlightenment. That motivation is the excellent beginning, bodhicitta.

While offering prostrations, maintain the view free from the three factors. Offer prostrations with the understanding that ultimately there is no object to prostrate to, no prostration being offered, and no one offering prostrations. Maintain an understanding that everything is as real as an illusion or a dream. This requires insight into profound emptiness. While recognizing profound emptiness, offer the prostrations. Combine the relative practice of prostrations with the absolute practice of realizing emptiness. That is called the excellent main part, non-conceptual practice.

Profound emptiness is a very subtle subject, so beginners should be taught through examples and analogies [dpe]. Thus, one is taught that all phenomena are as real as an illusion [sgyu ma], a reflection of the moon in water [chu zla], an optical distortion [mir yor], a mirage [smig rgyu], a dream [rmi lam], an echo [sgra bryan / brag cha], a city of gandharvas [dri za'i grong khyer], a magical trick [mig 'phrul], a rainbow ['ja' tshon], a water bubble [glog chu bur], a reflection in a mirror [me long nang gi gzugs brnyan], and so forth. Eventually, beginners should receive instructions on how to recognize profound emptiness from a qualified master.

At the end of a practice session, dedicate the merit and virtue accumulated during the session to all sentient beings. That is the excellent conclusion, dedication of merit. In this manner embrace [rtsis zin pa] all practices with the three-fold excellence.

Once bodhicitta has taken birth in your mind, protect it through mindfulness [dran pa], keeping it in focus all the time, as if you were tied to it with a rope. Next, protect it through introspection [shes bzhin], examining, analyzing and searching your mind. Finally, protect it by being attentive to it [bag yod]. With these qualities in mind, you will protect and nurture bodhicitta correctly.

The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra has dedicated one chapter each to heedfulness [bag yod] and introspection [shes bzhin]. Mindfulness [dran pa] in this context means not forgetting the key points of what to avoid and what to accept [blang 'dor gyi gnas ma brjed pa byed pa]. A practitioner must always remember what to avoid, the ten non-virtuous actions [mi dge ba bcu], and what to accept, the ten virtous actions [dge ba bcu]. He should always remember the benefits of bodhicitta and the disadvantages of not having bodhicitta.

Heedfulness [bag yod] means to be aware of any action of body, speech and mind. A bodhisattva must be at all times careful not to engage in non-virtue [lus ngag yid gsum mi dge ba'i phyogs la mi 'gro ba]. Heedfulness is directed outward.

Introspection [shes bzhin] means to be constantly observing whether one should reject [spang bar bya ba] or accept [blang bar bya ba] any given situation. The Bodhisattva checks whether his actions of body, speech and mind are at any moment in accordance with bodhicitta or not. Introspection is directed inward. It is an introspective analysis that adjusts one's reactions in order to safeguard bodhicitta in all situations, mentally, verbally and physically.

The excellent beginning can also be the aspiration: "May the precious and supreme bodhicitta take birth in those in whom it has not yet taken birth." The excellent main part can be the aspiration: "And where it has taken birth may it not decrease, but ever increase more and more." The excellent conclusion is the dedication of the virtue that has been developed through these aspirations. Practicing like this, bodhicitta will not decrease but will always be stable in your mind.

With the alchemical metaphor, Śāntideva shows us that bodhicitta can transform our ordinary body, speech and mind into the enlightened body, speech and mind of the Buddha. With the metaphor of the jewel, Śāntideva teaches us to rely on bodhicitta, since the Buddha thoroughly examined it for countless aeons and saw its great value in bringing us to enlightenment. We need not doubt its value. The Buddha decided that bodhicitta is the most valuable method, so we should resolve in our minds to practice it.

Text sections 228-230:

Using a metaphor of a fruit-bearing, wish-fulfilling tree, Śāntideva teaches that the virtues of bodhicitta do not come to an end but increase unceasingly.

Whatever deed, virtuous or non-virtuous, we have committed, we must experience the karmic ripening of that deed. Once the karmic ripening [rnam smin] is experienced, however, this particular karma has ended, perished or exhausted itself. Each individual karma is impermanent and comes to a conclusion.

Virtuous deeds can be 'defiling virtue' [zag bcas kyi dge ba] or 'non-defiling virtue' [zag med gyi dge ba]. Defiling virtue is an ordinary wholesome deed, performed by ordinary people within the normal dualistic framework of their minds. Non-defiling virtues are

wholesome deeds performed by an individual who has realized the absolute bodhicitta [don dam sems bskyed].

All other virtues [dge ba gzhang gang] means any kind of virtue not embraced by bodhicitta, any kind of 'defiling virtue' [zag bcas kyi dge ba], such as refraining from killing, stealing, lying, sexual misconduct, taking intoxicants and so forth, that is carried out without being motivated by bodhicitta. Such ordinary virtues, which *concord with ordinary merit* [bsod nams cha mthun gyi dge ba] but are not embraced by bodhicitta, merely lead to rebirth in one of the higher realms. Once that merit is exhausted, the individual will revert from these states and again take rebirth in the lower realms. This limited virtue is exemplified by the fruit of the *plantain tree* (banana tree) [chu shing], a tree which bears fruit only once and then perishes.

Three types of persons can be identified according to the different kinds of virtue they accumulate. The three types of persons are: the lower type, referring to the ordinary worldly beings ['jig rten pa]; the more advanced type, śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, the followers of the Hīnayāna; and the highest kind of person, the Buddha and the bodhisattvas, the followers of the Mahāyāna.

Each of these three types of persons accumulates a different kind of virtue: 1) the lower type of person gathers virtue that concords with worldly merit ['jig rten gyi bsod nams cha mthun gyi dge ba], 2) the more advanced type gathers virtue that concords with the attainment of liberation [thar pa cha mthun gyi dge ba], and 3) the highest kind of person gathers the virtue that concords with the liberation of the greater vehicle [theg chen thar pa cha mthun gyi dge ba].

Virtue is always practiced with a mental aim [dmigs yul] in mind. If one's motivation to practice virtue is wordly success and happiness or the achievement of a rebirth in the god realms, then that kind of virtue concords with ordinary worldly merit ['jig rten pa'i bsod nams cha mthun pa'i dge ba]. Such virtue ends as soon as the merit has ripened into the fruition.

Even virtue that concords with liberation, like the virtue of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, perishes once they have reached the state called *nirvāṇa without remainder* [lhag med myang 'das].[1511] Śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas have no fixations concerning the five aggregates [phung po lnga]. They do not retain the slightest residual of any aggregate that remains under the power of the truth of suffering and the truth of the origin of suffering [sdug bsngal dang kun 'byung gyi bden pa'i phung po].

The skandhas develop as a result of ego-clinging [bdag 'dzin]. Since śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas have completely overcome clinging to a personal identity [gang zag gi bdag], without the slightest remainder, they have gained the fruition. Thus, they no longer retain any fixations on any aggregates subject to the truth of suffering and the

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[1511] Generally, there are said to be four tpyes of nirvāṇa: 1) rang bzhin gyi myang 'das, 2) mi gnas pa'i myang 'das, 3) lhag bcas kyi myang 'das, and 4) lhag med kyi myang 'das, For a detailed discussion, see *mngon rtogs rgyan gyi spyi don*, pages 13-15.

truth of the origination of suffering. The moment they reach the level of an arhat, they are freed from the suffering of change ['gyur ba'i sdug bsngal] and from suffering upon suffering [sdug bsngal gyi sdug bsngal]. The arhats even have the power to dissolve their bodies. Sometimes they rise up into the sky and dissolve like a rainbow; sometimes their bodies burst into fire and are completely consumed. Arhats pass away by demonstrating various magical powers [rdzu 'phrul], but since they retain subtle fixations in their minds, they cannot achieve the 'rainbow body' ['ja' lus] or the 'fading out of atoms' [rdul phran du dengs] as can great Dzogchen and Mahāmudra masters.

When the arhats became aware that the Buddha was about to pass into nirvāṇa, hundreds of thousands of them chose to die before the Buddha. Since many died showing amazing signs and magical powers and did not leave a body behind, their realization is called 'nirvāṇa without remainder' [lhag med myang 'das]. Once the virtues of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas that enable them to remain in this state are exhausted, they wake up and must enter into the path of the bodhisattvas. Sometimes they may remain for an aeon or even for a hundred aeons in this state of cessation ['gog pa]. When their merit comes to an end, they are awakened from their state by light rays emitted from the Buddha's body. The Buddha then instructs them to enter into the path of the bodhisattvas.

The meditation and virtuous lives of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas lead them only as far as the nirvāṇa without remainder. The limits of their path preclude them from reaching a state beyond this. To progress further and eventually reach the level of perfect buddhahood, they must enter into the bodhisattva path. Merit that concords with liberation simply does not lead to the attainment of buddhahood. Śrāvakas and bodhisattvas differ greatly in their respective aims [dmigs yul]. The śrāvakas aspire to peace from saṃsāric suffering while the bodhisattvas aspire to complete and perfect enlightenment.

The term 'śrāvaka', literally 'listener', refers to the followers of the Hīnayāna tradition, who proceed through four levels of spiritual attainments and reach the level of an arhat. A pratyekabuddha, literally 'self-arisen buddha', is someone who has accumulated sufficient merit and wisdom in former lifetimes to attain nirvāṇa without the teachings of a buddha. A pratyekabuddha stays totally private and will never teach others.

Compared to the unlimited nirvāṇa of the Buddha, which is like infinite space, the nirvāṇa of the śrāvakas and the pratyekabuddhas is said to be the size of a mustard seed. Nevertheless, the nirvāṇa of the śrāvaka-arhats and the pratyekabuddha-arhats is beyond the three realms of saṃsāra. They will never fall back into saṃsāra. They dwell for many aeons in a limited nirvāṇa until a beam of light emanated by the Buddha awakens them. Then the Buddha will teach them, "You have not yet achieved the unlimited nirvāṇa. Among the three kinds of suffering you have not transcended the omnipresent suffering in the making [khyab pa 'du byed kyi sdug bsngal]. You have overcome the obscurations of affliction [nyon sgrib] but not the obscurations of cognition [shes sgrib]. You must now proceed on the path of the bodhisattvas to the level of complete enlightenment."

Only a buddha is beyond omnipresent suffering in the making, the subtle form of impermanence. The wisdom [ye shes] of a buddha is utterly beyond impermanence. But the wisdom of the arhats, pratyekabuddhas and bodhisattvas is still subject to subtle levels of impermanence, the omnipresent suffering in the making. Their wisdom still changes from moment to moment. Their wisdom [ye shes] is still compounded ['dus byas]. The wisdom of cessation ['gog pa'i ye shes] is compounded. Only the wisdom of the Buddha is uncompounded ['dus ma byas pa'i ye shes] and indestructible. Only the Buddha has truly transcended the five skandhas.

Śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas have yet to develop the all-encompassing compassion of the bodhisattvas, who aim to guide all sentient beings to the level of complete enlightenment. Śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas do have compassion, but they do not practice with the motivation to guide all sentient beings to the level of complete enlightenment, one of the main features of the bodhisattva path.

Bodhicitta, whether it is relative or absolute bodhicitta, is like a wish-fulfilling tree and perpetually grants fruition. Any ordinary deed embraced with relative bodhicitta will have the *karmic ripening* [rnam smin gyi 'bras bu] of abundant rebirth in the higher realms. The results that concord with such a wholesome cause embraced by bodhicitta will always increase. Virtuous actions embraced by bodhicitta will never perish but will remain until the attainment of complete enlightenment and thus lead to attaining enlightenment by contributing to the accumulation of merit. Even if the virtue is relative and compounded ['dus byas kyi dge ba], bodhicitta transforms it into a non-compounded virtue ['dus ma byas kyi dge ba] that will remain until all sentient beings have attained enlightenment.

Conceptual merit [dmigs bcas kyi bsod nams] is compounded ['dus byas]. Non-conceptual merit [dmigs med gyi bsod nams] has two aspects. The first aspect is non-conceptual wisdom while on the path [lam gyi dmigs pa med pa'i ye shes], which is for the most part compounded ['dus byas]. The second aspect is the non-conceptual wisdom of having reached the fruition ['bras bu dmigs pa med pa'i ye shes], which is truly uncompounded ['dus ma byas pa]. Among the five paths [lam lnga], the first four are compounded. Only the last, the path of no more learning, is uncompounded.

Merit is that which has the power to smooth out all disharmonious circumstances [mi mthun pa'i phyogs thams cad 'jam thub pa zhig la bsod nams zer gi yod]. Once one has truly recognized the uncompounded nature of mind, inconceivable masses of merit are gained, and inconceivable masses of negativity [sdig pa] are purified in a very short period of time.

Virtue and merit can continuously grow through bodhicitta and through dedication. If one practices virtue but neither embraces it by bodhicitta nor dedicates it for the sake of all beings, this virtue will be very short-lived and not of ultimate benefit. That is why the three-fold excellence, as explained before, is so important. Since bodhicitta makes any kind of virtue grow continuously and remain forever, it is compared to the never-ending fruit of the *wish-fulfilling tree* [dpag bsam ljon shing].

When śrāvakas attain arhatship, they reach a state in which the skandhas of karma and of afflictions are exhausted without remainder [las nyon gyi phung po lhag med du zad], or they reach a state in which some residual skandhas of karma and afflictions remain [lhag bcas].

In general, virtuous and non-virtuous actions are the cause [rgyu] that can lead to three types of results ['bras bu]: 1) Fully ripened results [rnam smin gyi 'bras bu], 2) results similar to the cause [rgyu mthun gyi 'bras bu], 3) environmental results [bdag po'i 'bras bu / las dbang gi 'bras bu].

What does it mean that virtuous and non-virtuous actions form the karmic causes? A virtuous or non-virtuous action is karmically powerful if five factors are complete [yan lag lnga dang ldan pa]: 1) the object [gzhi], 2) the motivation or intention [bsam pa], 3) the actual act [sbyor ba], 4) the afflictions [nyon mongs], and 5) the completion [mthar thug].

For instance, the non-virtuous action of killing a human being requires (1) a human being as the object, (2) the intention to kill that person, (3) the actual act of killing, (4) the affliction of anger accompanying this action, and (5) the action brought to completion resulting in the death of that person.

1) Fully ripened results [rnam smin gyi 'bras bu]: If these five factors are complete in a virtuous or non-virtuous action, one has created a powerful karmic cause [rgyu] that leads to a fully ripened result. However, it is very difficult to determine exactly the relationship between cause and result. A tiny cause might ripen into a great result just as a tiny seed can grow into a big tree.

The most powerful force among the five factors that determine the magnitude of a karmic ripening is the motivation behind an action. For instance, if one's motivation to harm sentient beings is extremely strong, one will surely take rebirth in the hell realms [dmyal ba]. If one's harmful motivations are less powerful, one will take rebirth in the preta realms. And if one's harmful motivations are even less strong, one will take rebirth as an animal.

2) Results similar to the cause [rgyu mthun gyi 'bras bu]: This means that a cause and its fruition share a certain similarity. There are two kinds of results similar to the cause: a) results similar to the cause with regard to conduct and b) results similar to the cause with regard to experience.

a) Results similar to the cause with regard to conduct [byed pa rgyu mthun gyi 'bras bu]: This means the conduct of one's previous lives determines the conduct of one's present life. Due to one's deeds in previous lives, one has the similar inclination and tendency in this life. For instance, people who have been hunters in former lifetimes will have a strong inclination to hunt and hurt sentient beings from early childhood onward. Others who have been kind and helpful to people in former lifetimes will naturally have the tendency to be kind-hearted to others in this life. Due to one's previous actions, one enjoys performing similar actions again in this lifetime in a similar situation. Even in dreams one enjoys and dreams in accordance with patterns of one's previous lives.

b) Results similar to the cause with regard to experience [myong ba rgyu mthun gyi 'bras bu]: Whatever one has done in previous lifetimes will be experienced in accordance with the causes accumulated in former lifetimes. For example, one who has killed beings in previous lifetimes will experience the suffering of having a short life afflicted with many diseases. Those who have abandoned killing in previous lives will have a long lifespan without diseases in this life. Those who stole the property and riches of others will suffer from poverty in this life, while those who have been generous in previous lifetimes will be rich and prosperous in this life.

3) Environmental result [bdag po'i bras bu]: This means that, for instance, due to the power of the negative acts of killing committed in one's previous life, one will be born in an environment [yul / 'khor yug] that is unpleasant, devoid of medicinal trees and having poor harvests. One will lack food and water. Or, due to the power of abstaining from killing in the previous life, one will be reborn in an environment that is pleasant, filled with medicinal trees and rich in harvest. One will have abundance of food and drinks.

All three types of karmic results are connected. Based on one's powerful negative acts of killing sentient beings, complete with all five factors, one certainly takes rebirth in the hell realms. This is called a fully ripened result. Even after such a person has been liberated from the hell realms and takes again a human rebirth, he will have the urge to hunt and kill again. And in addition, he will have only a short life afflicted with diseases. This is a result similar to the cause with regard to conduct and to experience. Due to his former negative conduct he will be reborn in a unpleasant area. This is called an environmental result.

Buddha's body is a *mass of merit* [bsod nams kyi phung po]. Each of his thirty-two major marks and eighty minor signs springs from a particular virtue that he performed as a bodhisattva for three countless aeons. Because the Buddha, when he was still a bodhisattva, had abandoned lying in order to attain perfect enlightenment for the sake of all beings, he finally acquired the tongue of a buddha. Simply abiding by the precept of abstaining from lying, without embracing this precept with bodhicitta, will never bring about that kind of fruition. All the qualities of the Buddha's body can be similarly traced back to a specific virtue that he trained in. Taken together, all these virtues result in the mass of merit that constitutes the Buddha's wisdom body.

Buddha Śākyamuni's body, speech and mind are a wisdom continuum called 'wisdom body' [ye shes kyi sku]. His wisdom body is not subject to the confines of time and space but permeates all dimensions and the three times of past, present and future. The Buddha's wisdom body extends as far as space extends and is not subject to birth and death. With his great compassion, Buddha constantly cares for all sentient beings with no partiality. His compassion for a tiny insect is neither less nor more than for a tenth level bodhisattva.

For not a single instant does Buddha's wisdom forget or forsake any of the infinite sentient beings. A completely enlightened buddha knows everything that happens throughout the three times. His wisdom body is immediately present the moment you

think of him. Wherever there is water, the reflection of the sun will instantly manifest. In the same way, wherever someone generates faith in the Buddha, his wisdom and compassion will be present. The extent to which one receives Buddha's blessing depends on one's faith. The moment you think of him, his blessing is with you. The moment you think of him, you open up to the stream of blessings that he constantly showers on all beings, regardless of whether or not they remember him.

The sūtra tradition teaches that whoever practices the path of accumulation [tshogs lam] and the path of application [sbyor lam] will have the good fortune to meet the nirmāṇakāya of the Buddha [sangs rgyas sprul sku]. Whoever has reached one of the ten bodhisattva levels [sa bcu] will have the good fortune to see the saṃbhogakāya of the Buddha. On the eleventh level, the level of buddhahood, one will have the good fortune to see the dharmakāya of the Buddha. The wisdom body itself is the basis upon which one can meet the different aspects of Buddha according to one's realization and perception. The wisdom body itself is beyond matter and time. It manifests in the perception of sentient beings in accordance with their capacities and karma. The buddha nature, present in the mind of every sentient being, and the wisdom body of the Buddha are identical in essence. If we develop faith in the Buddha with a pure and open mind, the wisdom body of the Buddha is instantly present. The Buddha never forgets about sentient beings or neglects them. The moment you think of him he is with you.

Text sections 231-232:

There are four types of karma which lead to the experience of its fruition [rnam smin myong 'gyur gyi las]: 1) karma experienced within this life [mthong chos myong 'gyur gyi las], 2) karma experienced in the very next lifetime [skyes nas myong 'gyur gyi las], 3) karma experienced in subsequent lives [lan grangs gzhan la myong 'gyur gyi las], and 4) karma leading to the uncertain experience of its fruition. The first three types of karma are karma that leads to the certain experience of its fruition [myong par nges pa rnam pa gsum].

Similarly, negativity [sdig pa, skr. pāpa] is of two kinds: 'a negativity leading to the certain or definite experience of its fruition' [myong ba nges pa'i sdig pa] and 'a negativity leading to the uncertain experience of its fruition' [myong ba ma nges pa'i sdig pa].

When all five factors that constitute a non-virtuous action [mi dge ba'i yan lag lnga] or a negative deed [sdig pa] are completed, one has created a 'negativity that leads to the definite experience of its fruition' [myong ba nges pa'i sdig pa]. When a negative deed is intentionally committed and carried through to the end [bsam bzhin byas pa'i sdig pa], one has accumulated a negativity where all five factors of a non-virtuous action are complete.

For example, the five factors in the act of killing [srog gcod pa] are: 1) The object or basis [gzhi], identifying a sentient being other than oneself; 2) the motivation [bsam pa], having the concept that a sentient being is there while one's mind is not undeluded

[ma 'khrul ba] about the fact that one intends to kill that sentient being; 3) the application, engaging in the act of killing, either oneself or inciting another to do so, through poison, weapons, mantra and so forth; 4) the afflictions, the three mind poisons, in general, and in particular, anger during the completion of the act; and 5) the completion, accomplishing the death of a sentient being before oneself comes to die.

This accumulated karma is also called 'karma which leads to the experience of its fruition' [rnam smin myong 'gyur gyi las], which means a 'karma the fruition of which one will definitely experience' [myong ba gtan gtan yong ba'i las] in the future.

A 'negativity leading to the certain experience of its fruition' refers to negative actions committed while one is fully aware [shes bzhin bsags pa'i las] and which one can later recall. If you kill your father, you will know you have committed a severe and serious crime, and you will always remember this horrible deed. It will remain in your mind. Such a deed is a negativity for which one would definitely experience a karmic fruition [gtan gtan 'bras bu myong nges pa'i sdig pa]. Nevertheless, bodhicitta is so strong that it has the power to purify even that degree of severe intentional negativity.

Any unintentionally committed negativity [ma bsam bzhin du byas pa'i sdig pa] is called a 'negativity leading to the uncertain experience of its fruition' [ma nges pa'i sdig pa]. Thus, a negative deed is committed, but all five factors are not complete. For instance: 1) The object or basis: One might have caused the death of a sentient being without having identified it as a sentient being. One walks on gravel but steps unintentionally on a sentient being. 2) Motivation: One has caused the death of a sentient being without having had the motivation to cause its death, because one's mind was deluded through the influence of alchohol and so forth. 3) Application: One has caused the death of a sentient being by unintentionally stepping on it or by carelessly throwing a stone in the dark. 4) Afflictions: The unintentional act of killing was done in a mental state of ignorance or indifference. 5) The completion: The death of a sentient being was caused.

We have also committed countless negative deeds throughout many lifetimes of which we are not aware and which we cannot recount. Such unintentional negativity has an uncertain karmic ripening, uncertain as to when and how it will ripen.

When we take a walk, for example, we unintentionally and accidentally kill many tiny insects. We do not know whether or how many sentient beings we have killed or harmed, neither do we experience the bad feeling of having done something wrong. When we experience the ripening of an intentional negativity, however, all of these countless unintentional deeds also ripen together with it. We might have one serious illness and at the same time feel slightly irritated or experience that things are not working out well for us. This minor accompanying suffering is said to be the ripening of unintentional negativity.

Harm against the three jewels can be the negative karma of abandoning the dharma. Some people fail to scrutinize a teacher before requesting teachings, and likewise some teachers do not scrutinize their students before giving teachings. In such cases the

student may become unhappy after a time with the teachings or the conduct of the teacher. The teacher may become unsatisfied with the student's performance. These feelings can lead to a split between them, so that the student develops wrong views about the dharma and even gives up the dharma. In this way the student accumulates the negative karma of abandoning the dharma [chos spong ba'i las]. Abandoning the dharma comes under the category of wrong views [log lta] and is an extremely serious misdeed among the ten non-virtuous actions [mi dge ba bcu].

Furthermore, destroying statues of the Buddha, Buddhist scriptures, or stūpas, slandering saṃgha members, negative talk about one's teachers and the like are all considered harm against the three jewels [dkon mchog gsum la gnod pa].

Whatever great evil one has committed, including killing one's father, breaking bodhisattva training, or violating tantric samāyas, all can be purified by entrusting oneself to bodhicitta.

Suppose you have committed the crime of killing someone's father. You will always fear that his children may take revenge on you. If you entrust yourself to a great hero and make him your ally, however, you are under his protection, so that the family of the father that you killed cannot retaliate. That is the example of the helpful hero [skyel ma dpa' bo / rogs pa bso mkhan gyi dpa' bo] who grants protection. Just like entrusting yourself to a good friend or a good physician, entrust yourself to bodhicitta. Make friends with bodhicitta, rely on bodhicitta, and live your life according to bodhicitta.

Contact bodhicitta through constant remembering, through aspiration and contemplation. At first, bodhicitta is like an aspiration. Slowly, it will develop into a commitment [dam bca' ba]. Once the wisdom of egolessness is realized [bdag med rtogs pa'i shes rab], you will never be separated from bodhicitta. Only when you have realized wisdom [ye shes] will you be able to have true commitment [dam bca' ba]. That is called 'wisdom commitment' [dam bca' ba'i ye shes].

Similarly, if you totally entrust yourself to bodhicitta, despite having committed severe and negative deeds that should lead to certain rebirth in the hell realms, you will, nevertheless, be instantaneously liberated from the consequences of your negative actions. But even in the unlikely event of taking rebirth in the hell realms, you will stay there only briefly, being liberated from hell as swiftly as a *silken ball* [dar gyi pho long] thrown on the ground bounces back.[1512]

The Tibetan term 'bag-chen nam' [bag can rnams] connotes 'deluded ones' [nor 'khrul can], 'those with habitual patterns' [bag chags yod mkhan] or 'those who are fearful' ['jigs snang yod mkhan]. It should not be confused with the term 'bag-yö-chen nam' [bag yod

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1512 See *sangs rgyas bcom ldan 'das kyi rnam thar*, page 417: The Bhagavān said to Śāriputra, "Ajātaśatru's regret is as big as Mount Sumeru and thus what is left to purify is only as big as a mustard seed. Therefore, He will only go briefly to hell and not be touched by its suffering" [bcom ldan 'das kyis śā ri'i bu la ma skyes dgra'i 'gyod pa ri rab tsam ni byang la yungs 'bru tsam zhig lus te / dmyal bar yud tsam gyis phyin kyang de'i sdug bsngal gyis mi reg go zhes gsungs so].

can rnams], meaning 'those who are heedful', 'those who are conscientious'. The Indian commentary by Prajñākaramati[1513] uses the term 'bag-chen nam' to ask: "Why do all those ignorant beings, those foolish ones who lack wisdom, not devote themselves to it or rely on it?"

Meditation on bodhicitta is very powerful and effective. The Indian master Asaṅga meditated for twelve years on his meditation deity [yi dam], Maitreya, without having any vision. The moment he developed bodhicitta, however, all his negative deeds were purified, and he encountered Maitreya. Through the purifying effect of bodhicitta, he was able to make that instant leap of progress in his practice. For all these reasons, bodhicitta is the supreme method for purifying negative deeds.

Text section 233:

As in this example of the fire at the end of an aeon [dus mtha'i me], all the unintentional negativities [ma nges pa'i sdig pa], which are even more than the intentional negativities that we can remember, will be purified in one moment by bodhicitta's great power. If one practices the meditation of relative bodhicitta [kun rdzob byang chub sems], these unintentional negativities will gradually decrease. If one can practice absolute bodhicitta [don dam byang chub sems], all unintentional negativity will be totally eradicated. Therefore, one should definitely meditate on bodhicitta.

Meditating on bodhicitta is much more powerful than simply meditating on compassion. The power of bodhicitta exceeds the power of compassion hundreds of thousands of times. Ordinary beings and śrāvakas do have compassion, but genuine bodhicitta is found only in a few exceptional people. Everybody who has true bodhicitta is endowed with compassion, but not every person who has compassion is endowed with bodhicitta.

Compassion is the wish to free beings from suffering. A mother has compassion and love for her children, but she lacks bodhicitta. Bodhicitta has two aspects, 'compassion' [snying rje] and 'knowledge' [shes rab]. With compassion the bodhisattva focuses on benefiting others [snying rjes gzhan don la dmigs pa] by making the commitment: "I will free all beings from their suffering." With knowledge the bodhisattva focuses on perfect enlightenment [shes rab kyis rdzogs byang la dmigs pa] by making the commitment: "I will establish all sentient beings on the level of perfect enlightenment." Thus, compassion and loving kindness by themselves are not called bodhicitta, although they are the basis for bodhicitta.

The qualities of bodhicitta are as inconceivable as the qualities of the Buddha. Whoever has bodhicitta can attain buddhahood, while whoever lacks bodhicitta can never reach buddhahood. Bodhicitta is the unfailing seed that leads to the accomplishment of buddhahood. In order to gain trust and faith in bodhicitta,

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1513 *sher 'byung bka' 'grel*, page 5, folio 55b3-4: de la mi shes pa'i sems can thams cad shes rab dang bral ba'i rmongs pa rnams kyis ci ltar mi brten cing brtan par mi byed.

however, one must have accumulated considerable merit in this and former lifetimes. First, one needs some understanding of the Buddha's inconceivable qualities to gain trust in the Buddha. Then one needs the wish to accomplish buddhahood. Even having the wish to attain buddhahood, however, one must have the merit to develop bodhicitta in order to truly embark on the path to enlightenment.

Text sections 234-239:

References to other textbooks [gzhan du zhal 'phang ba] means 'to encourage to look somewhere else'.

Since the benefits and qualities of bodhicitta are inconceivable, they cannot all be explained exhaustively here in the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. Therefore, Śāntideva recommends reading the Gaṇḍha-vyūha-sūtra for further details which recount the story of Sudhana. Sudhana was a student of Mañjuśrī and received from him a *directive* [lung bstan] to study the conduct of a bodhisattva with the monk Meghaśrī [sprin gyi dpal]. Beginning with Meghaśrī, he studied with one hundred and ten teachers, each of whom taught him one quality of bodhicitta, a single aspect of the bodhisattva conduct. Finally, he met Lord Maitreya, who told him to examine his palace. Sudhana saw one aspect of the conduct of a bodhisattva displayed in each palace window. For instance, he saw the act of sacrificing one's head and the benefits of performing that act. In this way, through two hundred and thirty examples, the Gaṇḍha-vyūha-sūtra teaches all the benefits of bodhicitta.[1514]

Text section 242:

Relative bodhicitta is obtained the moment the bodhisattva commitments [sdom pa] take root in one's mind. This happens during a ceremony where the master recites passages from the third chapter of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, and the students repeat after him. The master indicates the birth of bodhicitta by snapping his fingers. At that moment the commitments are born in the students' minds.

Thus, relative bodhicitta arises through these *tangible indicators* [rags pa brda las byung ba]. Generally, body [lus] and speech [ngag] are 'tangible' [rags pa], while mind [sems] is 'subtle' [phra ba]. Body is gross [rag pa], tangible and visible [mthong rgyu yod pa]. Speech is less tangible, less gross, since it is only audible. Mind is subtle since it is not tangible, visible or audible. In the ritual of receiving the bodhisattva precepts, bodhicitta takes root through a physical gesture at the moment when the teacher snaps his fingers. It takes root through speech, when the teacher utters the appropriate words. It is supported by setting up a shrine with a statue of the Buddha. These tangible circumstances bring about the birth of relative bodhicitta.

In Asaṅga's tradition, the students receive the precepts for bodhicitta of aspiration and for bodhicitta of application separately. In Nāgārjuna's tradition, however, the

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1514 See *Flower Ornament Scripture*, pages 1621-1625.

tradition that Paltrül Rinpoche follows, students receive both aspects of relative bodhicitta together [stabs gcig tu len].

The students must think that the bodhicitta precepts are born in their minds at the very moment when the preceptor snaps his fingers. They should think, "Now the bodhicitta is born in my mind. Now the bodhisattva precepts have taken birth in my mind. From today onward, I am a bodhisattva." That is called developing relative bodhicitta that 'arises through tangible indicators' [rabs pa brda las byung ba]. The tradition of passing on the bodhisattva precepts from master to student has been uninterrupted from the time of the Buddha up until the masters of the present day. The great Indian scholar and preceptor Śāntarakṣita brought the bodhisattva precept lineage to Tibet. The Nyingma School is still maintainig this lineage unimpaired.

It is highly recommended that students begin their spiritual practice with the Śākyamuni liturgy written by Mipham Rinpoche called 'Treasury of Blessings' [thub chog byin rlabs gter mdzod]. Through this practice students will gather the necessary merit to generate bodhicitta. At the same time students should study the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, particularly the first three chapters. They should learn about all the bodhisattva precepts and decide whether or not they can keep the precepts. Then they should receive the precepts in a ceremony from a qualified teacher who possesses the blessings of the lineage. On this basis they can develop relative bodhicitta in the proper way. As they continue to study the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, they should receive teachings on absolute bodhicitta.

At Śrī Siṃha Shedra, the bodhisattva precepts are given during the first year of study after completion of the entire teachings on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra. Whoever participates in the annual three month Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra practice seminar [spyod 'jug mchod rgan ma] will receive the precepts at the very beginning and will then take them every day during the three month ritual. For as long as we have not realized absolute bodhicitta, we should take the bodhisattva precepts every day.

Absolute bodhicitta is achieved through subtle dharmatā, the recognition of the natural state. This means one can realize absolute bodhicitta only when recognizing dharmatā, the natural state [chod nyid]. Absolute bodhicitta comes about through *subtle dharmatā* [chos nyid phra ba]. This happens when mind itself recognizes its own essence, the buddha nature. This is a most subtle process, which can only be truly realized through the blessings of a great master. Mere intellectual understanding will not suffice. If the student is fortunate, he might receive the pointing-out instruction from a master of the Essence Mahāmudra lineage or the Dzogchen lineage.

For as long as one has only an intellectual understanding of emptiness, without yet having realized it directly, bodhicitta is conceived through tangible indicators. However, once emptiness has been realized, bodhicitta must be understood to be ultimate bodhicitta.

In Asaṅga's Sūtrālaṃkāra [mdo sde'i rgyan], Maitreya taught five causes [rgyu] or reasons [rgyu mtshan] through which relative bodhicitta arises:

(1) Through the power of a friend, (2) the power of the cause, (3) the power of the root,
(4) The power of studying, and (5) (the power of) familarization with virtue,
(Relative bodhicitta) arises (first) unstable and (later) stable.
Thus, I explain the development of (relative) bodhicitta, which is (primarily) revealed by others.

Text section 243:

According to this statement by Asaṅga, there is one cause for the rise of unstable [mi brtan pa] bodhicitta, the power of a friend, and there are four causes that lead to a stable [brtan pa] bodhicitta.

(1) The first power through which relative bodhicitta arises is *the power* (or influence) *of a friend* [grogs kyi stobs], as in meeting a spiritual friend [dge ba'i bshes gnyen] or a good dharma friend [chos grogs] who inspires you to follow his example and make an aspiration [smon lam] to attain enlightenment for the sake of all beings. This is illustrated by the following story:

"In former times, three children made aspirations in front of the Buddha and his two chief disciples. One prayed to become a buddha and the other two prayed to become his supreme śrāvaka-arhat disciples. Through the power of their aspirations, one actually became Buddha Śākyamuni, and the other two became his two chief disciples, Śāriputra and Maudgalyāyana." This is the power of aspirations inspired by a friend [grogs smon lam gyi stobs]. Bodhicitta can also be born directly through the influence of a spiritual friend [grogs kyi nus] who tells stories and inspires one.

Text section 244:

(2) The second power is *the power of the cause* [rgyu thobs], which makes one awaken to the Mahāyāna family [rigs sad pa]. This means one awakens to a natural affinity for the Mahāyāna qualities [theg chen gyi rigs sad pa]. Someone who accumulated great merit in former lifetimes will in this life, from early childhood onward, feel great compassion and kindness for all sentient beings. Through the power of the cause of merit accumulated in former lifetimes, one awakens to the Mahāyāna family [rgyu rigs sad pa]. Some people have meditated on bodhicitta in previous lifetimes, and thus, a seemingly insignificant circumstance can cause them to spontaneously develop bodhicitta. In this way they awaken through the power of the cause [rgyu] of residual karma [las 'phro] from former lifetimes to the Mahāyāna affinity [rigs sad pa]. This is the second power that brings about the relative bodhicitta. This power is considered stable.

(3) The third power bringing about relative bodhicitta is *the power of the root* [rtsa ba'i stobs]. The root of bodhicitta is compassion, and without compassion bodhicitta cannot take birth. Bodhicitta is always endowed with compassion, but compassion is not

necessarily endowed with bodhicitta. Keeping strong and heartfelt compassion constantly in mind can, however, lead to the natural arising of bodhicitta. Again, this power is considered to lead to a stable bodhicitta.

(4) The fourth power is *the power of studying* [thos pa'i stobs]. Through the power of studying many profound Mahāyāna teachings, stable bodhicitta may arise firmly in one's mind.

(5) The fifth power is *the power of familiarization with virtue* [dge ba goms stobs]. If one constantly practices the ten wholesome actions and gathers the accumulation of merit through offerings, generosity, and so forth, the precious bodhicitta may arise firmly and stably in one's mind.

The first of these five powers, the power of the friend, is not considered to be stable in the long run. If the friend's attitude deteriorates, one might follow his negative example and destroy one's own bodhicitta. The other four powers are considered stable conditions for the birth of bodhicitta because they will not be easily damaged in adverse circumstances. Bodhicitta that arises from another person's efforts, like the efforts of a friend, is unstable. The other four causes arise from one's own efforts and are, therefore, considered stable.

Kongtrül Lodro Thaye elaborates on the phrase *revealed by others*, saying, "Relative bodhicitta primarily comes about due to causes that are revealed by others" [kun rdzob sems bskyed ni gtso bor gzhan gyis bstan pa'i rgyu las byung ba'o]. Relative bodhicitta arises through the abovementioned five causes. It does not depend on receiving the bodhisattva precepts.

All these five causes for relative bodhicitta are tangible indicators [rags pa brda]. Relative bodhicitta always maintains the concept that distiguishes between the three factors ['khor gsum rnam par rtog pa'i rnam rtog]: object [yul], subject [yul can] and the action [bya ba]. Absolute bodhicitta, the recognition of wisdom, no longer discriminates among the three factors ['khor gsum mi dmigs pa'i ye shes].

The word *development* [bskyed] in the phrase *development of bodhicitta* [sems bskyed] connotes 'expansion' [chen por btong]. At first bodhicitta is limited, feeble and unstable. Through practice it slowly grows, becoming stronger and more stable. Bodhicitta continues expanding until finally coming to include all sentient beings.

Relative bodhicitta may take birth [skye pa] naturally in someone's mind, or an individual may develop it [bskyed pa] through a teacher's instructions. Even when bodhicitta is developed, it must still truly be born in one's mind. The natural birth of bodhicitta is, therefore, considered more valuable than artificially developing it.

Text sections 245-246:

The question raised in the text is: "On what basis is bodhicitta developed?" Another way to put this question is: "What actually is being developed? Is bodhicitta a *mental pattern* [sems byung] or is it the *dominant mind* [gtso sems]?" Asaṅga and his brother Vasubandhu [dbyig gnyen] stated that developing bodhicitta by making the pledge to

liberate all sentient beings is developing a 'mental pattern' [sems byung]. On the other hand, Ārya Vimuktasena ['phags pa rnam grol sde] and Haribhadra [seng ge bzang po] stated that developing bodhicitta is developing the 'dominant mind' [gtso sems]. They did not accept the position of Asaṅga and Vasubandhu. Unifying both positions, the omniscient Longchen Rabjam stated that when one develops the 'dominant mind' [gtso sems], the 'mental pattern' [sems byung] is developed along with it.

When you look at a vase and think "vase" that mental label is called 'dominant mind' [gtso sems]. When you begin to distinguish different attributes of the vase such as size, height, value, beauty and so forth, these mental labels are called 'mental patterns' [sems byung] or 'secondary mind' ['khor sems].

Text section 247:

What is bodhicitta? At the very beginning one must be introduced to bodhicitta. Bodhicitta literally means 'mind of the Enlightened One' or 'mind of the Buddha' [sangs rgyas kyi sems]. *Bodhi* [byang chub] is identical with enlightenment or buddhahood.

Bodhicitta has two special features [khyad chos gnyis]: focusing with compassion on benefiting others [snying rjes gzhan don la dmigs pa], and focusing with wisdom on perfect enlightenment [shes rab kyis rdzgos byang la dmigs pa].

Both of these aspects of bodhicitta are combined in the thought: "I will free all beings from suffering" and the thought: "I will establish all beings on the level of perfect enlightenment." A Mahāyāna practitioner must commit to these two aspects [de gnyis la dam bca' ba]; bodhicitta requires that both features be complete. Merely having compassion for sentient beings is not bodhicitta, although it is meritorious and wholesome. Compassion is only one of the causes [rgyu] of bodhicitta or one aspect [cha] of bodhicitta but not bodhicitta itself.

The second special feature, the thought, "I will establish all beings on the level of perfect enlightenment," requires the wisdom [shes rab] of identifying enlightenment or the level of buddhahood. Enlightenment [byang chub], buddhahood [sangs rgyas], liberation [thar ba], bliss [bde ba] and so on are all terms describing the same goal. One must have considerable wisdom to really aspire to such a goal.

Text sections 248-249:

The text sections 248 and 249 discuss absolute bodhicitta. 'Absolute bodhicitta' [don dam sems bskyed] or 'transcendental bodhicitta' ['jig rten las 'das pa'i byang chub sems] cannot be realized through ceremonies but comes about through meditation. As Maitreya said in Asaṅga's Sūtrālaṃkāra [mdo sde rgyan]:

> When the perfect Buddha is pleased,
> When the accumulations of merit and wisdom are well-gathered,
> When non-conceptual wisdom concerning all phenomena has been born,

That is understood to be the absolute (bodhicitta).

The first step to let absolute bodhicitta arise is to please the Buddha or your master through the three delights [mnyes pa gsum]. The supreme way to delight your master is through practicing meditation [sgrub pas mnyes par byed pa]. This indictates that non-conceptual wisdom only arises when a practitioner relies on a master.

The second best way to delight your master is by serving him with body and speech [lus ngag gis zhabs tog]; and last, to delight him through material offerings [zang zing gi mchod pa]. By pleasing your master in these ways, the blessings will be granted. The blessing of the glorious root guru is indispensable for the realization of absolute bodhicitta.

The second step is to gather the two accumulations of merit and wisdom. The accumulation of merit is gathered through practicing the seven branches [yan lag bdun pa] or through any other kind of physical, verbal or mental merit. The accumulation of wisdom is gathered by practicing the recognition of mind essence. As it is said:

As far as the ultimate, the co-emergent wisdom, is concerned,
Know that it is foolish to rely upon any methods other than
Practices for gathering the accumulations and purifying obscurations,
As well as the blessing of the glorious root guru.

The Buddha was the direct master of the bodhisattvas. While Buddha was still present as the supreme nirmāṇakāya [mchog gi sprul sku], the bodhisattvas served him with great devotion. Even Buddha Śākyamuni himself, our *sublime teacher* [yongs 'dzin dam pa], served and pleased hundreds of buddhas and received meditation instructions from them in former aeons. After gathering the accumulations of merit and wisdom for one incalculable aeon, he recognized *non-conceptual wisdom* [mi rtog ye shes], the *absolute bodhicitta* [don dam pa'i byang chub sems], and thus reached the first bodhisattva level. Having gained the realization of buddha nature, Buddha Śākyamuni traversed, over the course of another countless aeon, from the first through the seventh bodhisattva levels. During the third countless aeon, he traversed from the eighth bodhisattva level to the level of a perfectly enlightened buddha.

The absolute bodhicitta is realized only from the first bodhisattva level [sa dang po] onward, from the path of seeing [mthong lam] onward. On the paths of accumulation [tshogs lam] and of application [sbyor lam], absolute bodhicitta is not yet realized. The śrāvakas have not realized absolute bodhicitta at all.

Text section 250 / stanza 16:

Text sections 250-262 discuss the various distinctions of bodhicitta. Bodhicitta can be differentiated in many ways: by the six transcendental perfections [phar phyin drug], by the *twenty-two similes* [dpe nyer gnyis], by the different stages [sa mtshams] of qualities, or by the *eighty unceasing factors* [mi zad brgyad cu].

In Asaṅga's Abhisamayālaṃkāra [mngon rtogs rgyan], Maitreya explains twenty-two similes for bodhicitta: 1) earth [sa], 2) gold [gser], 3) moon [zla ba], 4) fire [me], 5) treasure [gter], 6) jewel mine [rin chen 'byung gnas], 7) ocean [mtsho], 8) diamond [rdo rje], 9) mountain [ri], 10) medicine [sman], 11) spiritual friend [bshes gnyen], 12) wish-fulfilling jewel [yid bzhin nor bu], 13) sun [nyi ma], 14) song [glu], 15) king [rgyal po], 16) storehouse [mdzod], 17) highway [lam po che], 18) conveyance [bzhon pa], 19) spring [dkod ma'i chu], 20) melodious sound [sgra snyan], 21) river [chu bo] and 22) cloud [sprin].[1515]

These twenty-two similes stand for the following qualities accompanying bodhicitta at different *stages* [sa mtshams] of development: 1) earth [sa] and earnest desire ['dun pa]; 2) gold [gser] and intention [bsam pa]; 3) moon [zla ba] and superior determination [lhag pa'i bsam pa]; 4) fire [me] and application [sbyor ba]; 5) treasure [gter] and generosity [sbyin pa]; 6) jewel mine [rin chen 'byung gnas] and discipline [tshul khrims]; 7) ocean [mtsho] and patience [bzod pa]; 8) diamond [rdo rje] and diligence [brtson 'grus]; 9) mountain [ri] and meditation [bsam gtan]; 10) medicine [sman] and wisdom-knowledge [shes rab]; 11) spiritual friend [bshes gnyen] and skillful means [thabs la mkhas pa]; 12) wish-fulfilling jewel [yid bzhin nor bu] and aspiration [smon lam]; 13) sun [nyi ma] and strength [stobs]; 14) song [glu] and wisdom [ye shes]; 15) king [rgyal po] and clairvoyance [mngon shes]; 16) storehouse [mdzod] and the two accumulations [tshogs gnyis]; 17) highway [lam po che] and the factors conducive to enlightenment [byang phyogs dang mthun pa'i chos]; 18) conveyance [bzhon pa] and śamathā and vipaśyanā [zhi lhag]; 19) spring [dkod ma'i chu] and perfect recall and charisma [gzungs spobs]; 20) melodious sound [sgra snyan] and feast of dharma [chos kyi dga' ston]; 21) river [chu bo] and sole path [bgrod pa gcig pa'i lam]; 22) cloud [sprin] and dharmakāya [chos kyi sku].

The eighty unceasing factors [mi zad pa brgyad cu] are:[1516] 1) development of bodhicitta [sems bskyed mi zad pa],[1517] 2) motivation [bsam pa],[1518] 3) application [sbyor ba],[1519] 4) superior determination [lhag pa'i bsam pa],[1520] 5-10) the six transcendental perfections [pha rol tu phyin pa drug], 11-14) the four immeasurables [tshad med bzhi], 14-19) the five supernatural perceptions [mngon shes lnga], 20-23) the four means of attraction [bsud ba bzhi], 23-27) the types of correct discrimination [so so yang dag pa rig pa bzhi], 28-31) the four reliances [rton pa bzhi], 32-33) the two accumulations [tshogs gnyis], 34-70) the thirty-seven factors conducive for enlightenment [byang phyogs so bdun], 71-72) śamathā and vipaśyanā [zhi lhag gnyis],[1521] 73-74) perfect recall and brilliance [gzungs

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1515 See *shes bya kun khyab bar cha*, pages 102-103; *Buddhist Ethics*, pages 170, 416-419; and *Jewel Ornament*, pages 147-149.

1516 See *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III.*, pages 190-216.

1517 See *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III.*, page 190.

1518 See *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III.*, page 190.

1519 See *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III.*, page 191.

1520 See *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III.*, page 191.

1521 See *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III.*, pages 206-209.

spobs gnyis],[1522] 75-78) the four summaries of dharma [chos kyi sdom bzhi], 79) one single path to be traversed [bgrod pa gcig pa],[1523] and 80) skill in means [thabs la mkhas pa].[1524]

The six transcendental perfections [pha rol tu phyin pa drug; skr. ṣaṭpāramitā] are 1) generosity [sbyin pa; dāna], 2) discipline [tshul khrims; skr. śīla], 3) patience [bzod pa; skr. kṣānti], 4) diligence [brtson 'grus; skr. vīra], 5) concentration [bsam gtan; skr. dhyāna], and 6) knowledge [shes rab; skr. prajñā].[1525]

The four immeasurables [tshad med bzhi; skr. catur-aprameya] are 1) immeasurable loving kindness [byams pa; skr. maitrī], 2) immeasurable compassion [snying rje; skr. karuṇā], 3) immeasurable sympathetic joy [dga' ba skr. muditā], and 4) immeasurable equanimity [btang snyoms; upekṣā].[1526]

The five supernatural perceptions [mngon shes lnga] are 1) the supernatual perception of the divine eye [lha'i mig gi mngon shes; skr. divyacakṣurabhijñā], 2) the supernatual perception of the divine ear [lha'i rna ba'i mngon shes; skr. divyaśrotrābhijñā], 3) the supernatual perception of knowing the minds of others [pha rol gyi sems shes pa'i mngon shes; skr. paracittābhijñā], 4) the supernatural perception of recollecting former rebirths [sngon gyi gnas rjes su dran pa'i mngon shes; skr. pūrvanivāsānusmṛtyabhijñā], and 5) the supernatual perception of miracles [rdzu 'phrul gyi mgnon shes; skr. ṛddhyabhijñā].[1527]

The four means of attraction [bsud ba bzhi / bsdu dngos bzhi; skr. catuḥ-saṃgrahavastu] are 1) generosity [sbyin pa; skr. dāna], 2) speaking in a pleasant manner [snyan par smra ba; skr. priyavacana], 3) purposeful activity [don spyod pa; skr. arthacaryā] and 4) consistency (between words and actions) [don mthun pa; skr. samānavihāra].[1528]

The types of correct discrimination [so so yang dag pa rig pa bzhi; skr. catuḥpratisaṃvid] are 1) the correct discrimination of meaning [don so so yang dag par rig pa; skr. arthapratisaṃvid], 2) the correct discrimination of the teaching [chos so so yang dag par rig pa; skr. dharmapratisaṃvid], 3) the correct discrimination of definitive words [nges pa'i tshig so so yang dag par rig pa; skr. niruktapratisaṃvid], and 4) the correct discrimination of eloquent courage [spobs pa so so yang dag par rig pa; skr. pratibhānapratisaṃvid].[1529]

The four reliances [rton pa bzhi; skr. catuḥpratiśaraṇa] are 1) rely not on the words, but on the meaning [tshig la mi rton don la rton pa], 2) rely not on consciousness but on wisdom

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1522 See *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III.*, pages 209-213.

1523 See *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III.*, pages 213-214.

1524 See *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III.*, pages 213-216; *shes bya kun khyab stod cha*, page 289; *bu ston chos 'byung*, page 69 and *Jewellery of Scripture*, pages 138-139.

1525 See *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III.*, pages 191-194.

1526 See *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III.*, pages 194-195.

1527 See *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III.*, pages195-196.

1528 See *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III.*, page 196.

1529 See *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III.*, pages 196-197.

[rnam shes la mi rton ye shes la rton pa], 3) rely not on the expedient meaning but on the definitive meaning [drang don la mi rton nges don la rton pa] and 4) rely not on the person, but on the teaching [gang zag la mi rton chos nyid la rton pa].[1530]

The two accumulations [tshogs gnyis; sambhāradvaya] are the accumulation of merit [bsod nams kyi tshogs; skr. puṇyasambhāra] and the accumulation of widom [ye shes kyi tshogs; skr. jñānasambhāra].[1531]

The thirty-seven factors conducive for enlightenment [byang phyogs so bdun / byang chub kyi chos sum cu rtsa bdun; skr. saptatriṃśadbodhipraksadharma] are: (1-4) the four applications of mindfulness [dran pa nyer bzhag bzhi; skr. catuḥsṛtyupasthāna], (5-8) the four right endeavors [yang dag spong ba bzhi; skr. catuḥsamyakprahāṇa], (9-12) the four legs of miracles [rdzu 'phrul gyi rkang pa bzhi; skr. catvāraṛddhipādāḥ], (13-17) the five pure faculties [rnam byang dbang po lnga; skr. pañcendriya], (18-22) the five pure powers [rnam byang gi stobs lnga; skr. pañcabala], (23-29) the seven factors of enlightenment [byang chub yan lag bdun; skr. saptabodhyaṅga], and (30-37) the noble eightfold path ['phags lam yan lag brgyad; skr. aṣṭāṅgamārga].[1532]

The four applications of mindfulness [dran pa nyer bzhag bzhi] are 1) application of mindfulness to the body [lus dran pa nye bar bzhag pa], 2) application of mindfulness to sensation [tshor ba dran pa nye bar bzhag pa], 3) application of mindfulness to mind [sems dran pa nye bar bzhag pa], and 4) application of mindfulness to phenomena [chos dran pa nye bar bzhag pa].[1533]

The four right endeavors [yang dag spong ba bzhi] are 1) not to give rise to non-virtuous qualities that have not arise [mi dge ba'i chos ma skyes pa mi bskyed pa], 2) to abandon those that have arisen [skyes pa spang bar byed pa], 3) to give rise to the virtuous qualities that have not arisen [dge ba'i chos ma skyes pa bskyed pa], and 4) not to degenerate those that have arisen [skyes pa mi nyams par byed pa].[1534]

The four legs of miracles [rdzu 'phrul gyi rkang pa bzhi] are 1) the miracle-leg of intention ['dun pa'i rdzu 'phrul gyi rkang pa / 'dun pa'i ting nge 'dzin spong ba'i 'du byed dang ldan pa'i rdzu 'phrul gyi rkang pa], 2) the miracle-leg of diligence [brtson 'grus gyi rdzu 'phrul gyi rkang pa / brtson 'grus kyi ting nge 'dzin spong ba'i 'du byed dang ldan pa'i rdzu 'phrul gyi rkang pa], 3) the miracle-leg of attention [sems pa'i rdzu 'phrul gyi rkang pa / smes kyi ting nge 'dzin spong ba'i 'du byed dang ldan pa'i rdzu 'phrul gyi rkang pa], and 4) the miracle-leg of discernment [dpyod pa'i rdzu 'phrul gyi rkang pa / dpyod pa'i ting nge 'dzin spong ba'i 'du byed dang ldan pa'i rdzu 'phrul gyi rkang pa].[1535]

1530 See *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III.*, pages 197-198.

1531 See *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III.*, page 198.

1532 See *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III.*, pages 198-205.

1533 See *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III.*, pages 198-199.

1534 See *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III.*, pages 199-200.

1535 See *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III.*, pages 200-201.

The five pure faculties [rnam byang dbang po lnga] are 1) trust / faith [dad pa; skr. śraddā], 2) diligence [brtson 'grus; skr. vīrya], 3) mindfulness / recollection [dran pa; skr. smṛti], 4) concentration [ting nge 'dzin; skr. samādhi], and 5) wisdom-knowledge / discriminating knowledge [shes rab; skr. prajñā].[1536]

The five pure powers [rnam byang gi stobs lnga] are identical with the five pure faculties as mentioned above: 1) the power of trust / faith [dad pa'i stobs; skr. śraddābala], 2) power of diligence [brtson 'grus kyi stobs; skr. vīryabala], 3) power of mindfulness / recollection [dran pa'i stobs; skr. smṛtibala], 4) power of concentration [ting nge 'dzin gyi stobs; skr. samādhibala].[1537]

The seven factors of enlightenment [byang chub yan lag bdun] are 1) the enlightened factor of correct mindfulness [dran pa yang dag byang chub kyi yan lag], 2) the enlightened factor of correct investigation of phenomena [chos rab du rnam par 'byed pa yang dag byang chub kyi yan lag], 3) the enlightened factor of correct diligence [brtson 'grus yang dag byang chub kyi yan lag], 4) the enlightened factor of correct joy [dga' ba yang dag byang chub kyi yan lag], 5) the enlightened factor of correct pliancy [shin tu sbyangs pa yang dag byang chub kyi yan lag], 6) the enlightened factor of correct concentration [ting nge 'dzin yan dag byang chub kyi yan lag], and 7) the enlightened factor of correct equanimity [btang snyoms yang dag byang chub kyi yan lag].[1538]

The noble eightfold path ['phags lam yan lag brgyad] are 1) correct view [yang dag pa'i lta ba], 2) correct thought [yang dag pa'i rtog pa], 3) correct speech [yang dag pa'i ngag], 4) correct action [yang dag pa'i las kyi mtha'], 5) correct livelihood [yang dag pa'i 'tsho ba], 6) correct effort [yang dag pa'i rtsol ba], 7) correct mindfulness / recollection [yang dag pa'i dran pa] and 8) correct concentration [yang dag pa'i ting nge 'dzin].[1539]

The four summaries of dharma [chos kyi sdom bzhi] are 1) all composite things are impermanent ['du byed thams cad mi rtag pa], 2) all composite and defiling states are suffering ['du byed zag bcas thams cad sdug bsngal ba], 3) all phenomena are empty and devoid a self-entity [chos thams cad stong zhing bdag med pa] and 4) nirvāṇa is peace [mya ngan las 'das pa zhi ba'o].[1540]

All these multifarious distinctions of bodhicitta can be condensed into two: the bodhicitta of aspiration and the bodhicitta of application.

A śrāvaka arhat who has entered into cessation remains in this state for many aeons until being awakened from it by light rays emitted by the Buddha. This is called 'the empowerment of great light' ['od zer chen po'i dbang]. The Buddha then teaches the arhats that they have not reached enlightenment and encourages them to enter into the Mahāyāna path. They progressively embark upon the paths of accumulation and of

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1536 See *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III.*, page 201.

1537 See *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III.*, page 201.

1538 See *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III.*, pages 201-203.

1539 See *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III.*, pages 203-204.

1540 See *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III.*, page 213.

application; having once reached the path of seeing, they will realize absolute bodhicitta. Thus, according to the Mahāyāna tradition, even a śrāvaka arhat must begin over again on the paths of accumulation [tshogs lam] and of application [sbyor lam] .

No ordinary beings, śrāvakas, or pratyekabuddhas have realized absolute bodhicitta. This is realized only from the first bodhisattva level onward and is the special quality [khyad chos] of a 'noble being' ['phags pa]. Anyone who has realized absolute bodhicitta is a noble being. Absolute bodhicitta is achieved through the power of subtle dharmatā, the nature of reality [phra ba chos nyid kyis thob], while relative bodhicitta comes about through the power of *tangible indicators* [rags pa brda las byung ba].

Text section 251:

Relative bodhicitta has two aspects: bodhicitta of aspiration and bodhicitta of application. Both are ways of thinking. Many people are confused about this. Both types of bodhicitta are motivation and are not action or conduct. First, you form the motivation [bsam pa], and only then can you enter with that motivation into whatever conduct [spyod pa] you wish.

Bodhicitta of aspiration is said to be like the wish to go to Lhasa while bodhicitta of application is like setting out on the road to Lhasa. Bodhicitta of aspiration is the thought: "I will liberate all sentient beings from suffering and establish them on the level of perfect enlightenment." Bodhicitta of application is the thought: "In order to liberate all sentient beings from suffering and to establish them on the level of perfect enlightenment, I will practice generosity, discipline, patience, diligence, meditation and wisdom." These two aspects of bodhicitta are both motivation [bsam pa / kun slong].

The actual engaging in the six transcendental perfections is called 'application' or 'practice' [sbyor ba]. Motivation and application are two different things. Bodhicitta is motivation [kun slong] alone. Actually carrying out the conduct of the bodhisattvas, such as the six transcendental perfections and so forth, is application. All activities of the bodhisattvas are embraced by bodhicitta, but bodhicitta by itself does not involve action.

The term 'bodhicitta' means literally 'mind of awakening' or 'thought of awakening' [byang chub sems]. The term is not 'action of awakening' [byang chub bya ba] or 'conduct of awakening' [byang chub spyod pa]. While maintaining the motivation of bodhicitta, you can enact the conduct of the bodhisattva.

When you lose the motivation of bodhicitta, then your action is no longer bodhisattva conduct. Without the motivation of bodhicitta, your action is no longer the cause for attaining perfect enlightenment. Your meritorious actions might still concord with ordinary merit [bsod nams cha mthun gyi dge ba] or even with the virtue that concords with liberation [thar pa cha mthun gyi dge ba], but, nevertheless, your striving will not lead to complete enlightenment.

To commit to the fruition, to enlightenment, is the bodhicitta of aspiration ['bras bu la dam bca' ba smon pa byang chub sems]. The thought, "I will liberate all sentient beings from suffering, its causes and results, and establish them on the level of the omniscient Buddha," is bodhicitta of aspiration.

To commit to the cause, that which brings about enlightenment, is the bodhicitta of application [rgyu la dam bca' ba 'jug pa byang chub sems]. Actually entering into the conduct of any of the six perfections with the thought, "In order to liberate all sentient beings from their suffering, its causes and results, and establish them on the level of the omniscient Buddha, I will practice generosity, discipline, patience, diligence, meditation and wisdom, any of the six perfections," is bodhicitta of application.

For example, if you resolve, "In order to liberate all sentient beings from their suffering, its causes and results, and establish them on the level of the omniscient Buddha, I will study this text," this is the bodhicitta of application. The bodhicitta of application requires the intention to actually do something, to engage in any of the six transcendental actions and so forth, with a very specific and particular motivation.

Text section 252:

The collection of canonical commentaries, the Tangyur [bstan 'gyur], includes many different interpretations and opinions about the distinction between bodhicitta of aspiration and bodhicitta of application. The Buddhist masters of India and of Tibet did not all hold the same opinion.

For instance, *Master Jñanapāda* [slob dpon ye shes zhabs] states that the development of bodhicitta by ordinary people [so so'i skye bo] is bodhicitta of aspiration and that the development of bodhicitta by noble people ['phags pa], those who have reached the first bodhisattva level and beyond, is bodhicitta of application. Master Jñanapāda probably considered that the bodhicitta developed by ordinary people was not really effective and that an individual can truly help other beings only after reaching the first bodhisattva level of realization.

Text section 253:

Indian scholars such as *Abhaya* ['jigs med], *Jñanakīrti* [ye shes grags pa] and others taught that the development of bodhicitta by those who have reached the path of accumulation [tshogs lam] is bodhicitta of aspiration and that bodhicitta of application applies to those who have reached the path of application [sbyor lam] and more. These teachings derive from the practical experience of these masters and are not mere philosophical hairsplitting.

Text section 254:

The Indian masters Śāntipa, Ratnakara [rin chen 'byung gnas], Sāgaramegha [rgya mtsho sprin], and others stated that without having received the bodhisattva precepts in a ceremony from a qualified master, the mindset of wishing to attain enlightenment is

bodhicitta of aspiration. Once the bodhisattva precepts are received, the same mindset is bodhicitta of application. Thus, they made the distinction between bodhicitta of aspiration and of application mainly based on the absence or presence of the precepts.

Text section 255:

Prajñākaramati [shes rab 'byung gnas] taught that simply holding bodhicitta in one's mind without actually engaging with one's body and speech in the bodhisattva conduct [spyod pas ma zin pa] is bodhicitta of aspiration; actually engaging in the bodhisattva conduct [spyod pas zin pa] with body and speech is bodhicitta of application. Many Western Buddhists seem to hold this view.

Text section 257:

Lord Atiśa and *Longchenpa* both held the same opinion about how to distinguish between the two types of bodhicitta. Committing to [dam bca' ba] or focusing [dmigs pa] on the fruition, the level of buddhahood, is bodhicitta of aspiration, and committing to or focusing on the cause, the path, is bodhicitta of application. We, as students of the Old School [rnying ma pa], follow this interpretation of Atīśa and Longchenpa.

For details on the 22 *similes* [dpe] and the *supporting factors* [grogs] see text section 250.

Text sections 258-260:

Bodhicitta has two aspects, compassion [snying rje] and wisdom-knowledge [shes rab]. With compassion you focus on the benefit of others [snying rjes gzhan don la dmigs pa] by committing yourself, "I will free all mother-like sentient beings, equal to the reaches of space, from all suffering of existence and peace."

'Suffering of peace' refers to the static and finite peace state of the śrāvakas. A śrāvaka-arhat is free from ego-clinging [gang zag gi bdag 'dzin], subject fixation, and has attained the peace of nirvāṇa, but he still retains subtle fixations on phenomena [chos kyi bdag 'dzin], object fixations, which cause subtle fear and suffering. Bodhisattvas also have this subtle fixation. Therefore, the Mahāyāna practitioner aspires to free all beings from even the most subtle fixations.

With wisdom-knowledge you focus on perfect enlightenment [shes rab kyis rdzogs byang la dmigs pa] by committing yourself, "I will establish them on the level of complete and perfect enlightenment."

Text section 261-262:

Generally, the thought or wish to establish all sentient beings in the fruition, the level of buddhahood, is called bodhicitta of aspiration [smon sems]. Committing to the practice of the six perfections in order to establish all sentient beings on the level of buddhahood, the fruition, is called bodhicitta of application ['jug sems]. These two kinds of bodhicitta [byang chub kyi sems gnyis] are identical with the bodhisattva

precepts [byang chub sems dpa'i sdom pa] and also with the three disciplines of the bodhisattvas [byang chub sems dpa'i tshul khrims gsum].

The three disciplines of the bodhisattvas [tshul khrims gsum] are: (1) The discipline of refraining from negative conduct, (2) the discipline of practicing virtuous dharmas and (3) the discipline of fulfilling the benefit of sentient beings.

(1) The discipline of refraining from negative conduct [nyes spyod sdom pa'i tshul khrims]: A bodhisattva avoids all ten non-virtuous actions [mi dge ba bcu] like poison and keeps the basic training [bslab gzhi] of at least one of the seven precepts of individual liberation [so thar ris bdun], which are the precepts of (1) a fully ordained monk [dge slong; skr. bhikṣu]; (2) a fully ordained nun [dge slong ma; skr. bhikṣunī]; (3) a monk [dge tshul; skr. śrāmaṇera]; (4) a nun [dge tshul ma skr. śrāmaṇerikā]; (5) a male lay practitioner [dge bsnyen; skr. upāsaka]; (6) a female lay practitioner [dge bsnyen ma; skr. upāsikā] and (7) a probationary nun [dge slob ma; skr. śikṣāmāṇā].

(2) The discipline of practicing virtuous dharmas [dge ba chos sdud kyi tshul khrims]: While maintaining discipline of gathering merit by practicing any type of virtue, a bodhisattva studies and contemplates the sublime teachings and practices the teachings that lead to enlightenment, such as the six transcendental perfections.

(3) The discipline of fulfilling the benefit of sentient beings [sems can don byed kyi tshul khrims]: This is how a bodhisattva benefits sentient beings by appropriately meeting their expectations and needs.

Why are the two types of bodhicitta identical with the three disciplines? (1) The first discipline is refraining from negative conduct [nyes spyod sdom pa'i tshul khrims]. The essence of this discipline is giving up harming others, including the basis for such harm [gzhan gnod gzhi bcas spong], and accomplishing the benefits for others, including the basis for such benefit [gzhan phan gzhi bcas sgrub]. These two aspects are also present in the bodhicitta of aspiration and of application.

Bodhicitta of application and the discipline of refraining from negative conduct are identical when you make the following commitment: "I will free all mother-like sentient beings, equal to the reaches of space, from all suffering of existence and peace and establish them on the level of complete and perfect buddhahood. For this purpose I will give up the ten non-virtuous actions."

(2) The second discipline is the discipline of practicing virtuous dharmas [dge ba chos sdud kyi tshul khrims]. The bodhicitta of application and this second discipline are identical, being the thought: "In order to liberate all sentient beings from their suffering, its causes and results, and to establish them on the level of omniscient buddhahood, I will practice generosity, discipline, patience, diligence, meditation or wisdom, any of the six perfections."

(3) The third discipline is the discipline of fulfilling the benefit of sentient beings [sems can don byed kyi tshul khrims] and again is identical with the bodhicitta of application. Bodhicitta and the discipline of fulfilling the benefit of sentient beings are identical when you make the following commitment: "In order to free all mother-like sentient

beings, equal to the reaches of space, from all suffering of existence and peace and establish them on the level of complete and perfect buddhahood, I will tirelessly work to fulfill the benefit of beings."

Discipline [tshul khrims] refers mainly to disciplining your mind. The *precepts* [sdom pa] are also nothing other than the mental resolve to safeguard one's body, speech and mind from non-virtuous actions. Precepts and bodhicitta are identical in the commitment: "In order to liberate all sentient beings from their suffering, its causes and results, and to establish them on the level of the omniscient buddhahood, I will safeguard my conduct of body, speech and mind from non-virtuous actions." The term *precept* [sdom pa] simply means making the resolution: "I will abstain from the ten non-virtuous actions."

Even after taking the precepts to abstain from the ten non-virtuous actions, we still unintentionally slip into them from time to time. Without meaning to hurt others, due to our habitual patterns we still say words that are painful and cause harm. What is crucial then is to repeatedly re-evoke the intention to abstain from harming others. If one intentionally commits any of the ten non-virtuous actions, however, this is in total contradiction of bodhicitta.

In this manner the two types of bodhicitta, that of aspiration and that of application, are the very precepts of the bodhisattvas [byang chub sems dpa' sdom pa]. With body, speech and mind, one inflicts not the slightest harm on other beings but benefits other beings with body, speech and mind as much as one is able.

Bodhicitta as such is endowed with different aspects, as in the example of the precious wish-fulfilling jewel. This jewel can cure small pox [rims nad], grant all wishes and needs, and dispel darkness. Just as the wish-fulfilling jewel eradicates infectious diseases, bodhicitta dispels all negativity [sdig pa]. Just as the wish-fulfilling jewel grants all wishes, bodhicitta gives rise to all virtuous qualities [dge tshogs]. Just as the wish-fulfilling jewel dispels darkness, bodhicitta naturally enacts benefit for others [gzhan don byed pa].

Bodhicitta thus includes the three disciplines. As the wish-fulfilling jewel eradicates infectious diseases, bodhicitta is the discipline that safeguards against negative conduct [nyes spyod sdom pa'i tshul khrims]. As the wish-fulfilling jewel grants all wishes, bodhicitta is the discipline of practicing virtuous dharmas [dge ba chos sdud kyi tshul khrims]. As the wish-fulfilling jewel dispels darkness, bodhicitta is the discipline that benefits sentient beings [sems can don byed kyi tshul khrims].

Furthermore, the six perfections are included in the bodhicitta of aspiration and of application. Generally, the six perfections require that you actually do something. These perfections, however, are also included in the attitude of bodhicitta, which is the motivation. The characteristic of generosity [sbyin pa'i mtshan nyid], for instance, is to have a generous mind [btong sems]. It is the thought: "In order to liberate all sentient beings from their suffering, its causes and results, and to establish them on the level of omniscient buddhahood, I will donate rice to this beggar."

In the same way, discipline [tshul khrims] is a mind bent on renunciation [spong ba'i sems]; patience [bzod pa] is a mind unruffled by upset [sems mi 'khrugs pa]; diligence [brtson 'grus] is a mind that enjoys virtue [dge ba la spro ba]; meditation is a mind that does not stray from its focus [dmigs pa las mi g.yo ba]; and wisdom [shes rab] is the mind's capacity to distinguish all phenomena [chos thams cad rnam par dbye ba], to understand all distinctions clearly. In this fashion the bodhicitta of aspiration and of application includes all six perfections.

Bodhicitta of aspiration and of application is the basis of all paths. Endowed with bodhicitta, one can achieve buddhahood. Without bodhicitta, there is no chance to attain buddhahood. Bodhicitta is the unfailing seed for achieving buddhahood. It is compassion as it focuses on all sentient beings. It is wisdom as it focuses on buddhahood.

As explained above, bodhicitta of application requires the intention to actually do something, to engage in certain conduct with a particular motivation. Bodhicitta of application is the thought: "In order to liberate all sentient beings from their suffering, its causes and results, and to establish them on the level of omniscient buddhahood, I will make this donation." Even if you cannot actually complete the act of generosity, it is still sufficient. The most important factor is having the sincere motivation and mindset to do so.

Bodhicitta [byang chub sems] differs from conduct [spyod pa]. Bodhicitta mainly depends on motivation. Mind is the primary factor; conduct is secondary. Conduct always refers to an act of body or speech. Mind is that which puts body and speech into action. Even if the actual conduct is not engaged in, as long as your mind has made a decision, bodhicitta of application is already in place. When you act on this intention, you are carrying out the actual conduct of a bodhisattva.

If your mind has the true motivation of bodhicitta, even if your physical and verbal conduct seem non-virtuous from a traditional point of view, you are still accumulating virtue. If your mind is not imbued with the motivation of bodhicitta, even if your physical and verbal conduct are virtuous, your virtuous conduct does not lead to the attainment of enlightenment. Arousing bodhicitta is entirely a mental event.

So far we have been discussing relative bodhicitta [kun rdzob sems bskyed], but it is important to note that the difference between relative and absolute bodhicitta is marked by the absence or presence of the 'three factors' ['khor gsum]. If these three factors are present, bodhicitta is relative; if the three factors are absent, it is absolute bodhicitta. The three factors are fixations ['dzin pa]: holding on to subject, to object and to the action. For example, holding on to oneself as a donor, the subject, someone who donates a gift; holding on to a recipient, the object, someone who receives the gift; and holding on to the act of giving, the action. Absolute bodhicitta is free from these three fixations. The bodhisattva performs generous actions without holding on to these three fixations. The actions of a bodhisattva who is truly beyond these fixations are called 'transcendental perfections' [pha rol tu phyin pa].

If you want to become a bodhisattva, you should receive the bodhisattva commitments [byang sdom] from a qualified preceptor during a proper ceremony. In that ceremony you request the Buddha, the bodhisattvas and the vajra master to consider you with kindness. You visualize the Buddha and bodhisattvas in the sky in front of you, and you repeat the words of the bodhisattva precepts after the preceptor three times. Following the third repetition, the preceptor snaps his fingers; at that moment you should imagine that the precepts have taken birth in your mind. By receiving the precepts in this way you take upon yourself the commitment to keep the three disciplines [tshul khrims rnam pa gsum] of a bodhisattva.

The main point is to never forsake sentient beings. Always maintain the wish that you want to free all sentient beings from suffering and that you want to establish them on the level of perfect buddhahood. Through our habitual patterns, our mind is not greatly concerned with the welfare of others most of the time. This is normal for a beginner and does not mean that you have lost your bodhisattva commitment. Only if you consciously make up your mind not to help others, particularly when you have an opportunity to benefit them, have you truly lost the bodhisattva precepts.

Having occasional negative thoughts about others or sometimes speaking in an improper manner about others comes from the force of your former bad habits and will definitely impair your bodhisattva precepts. This level of negativity will not destroy the precepts. However, you should re-take your bodhisattva precepts on a daily basis. The tremendous positive momentum of bodhicitta will gradually change the negative patterns of your mind and increase your positive tendencies.

Text section 263 / stanza 17:

In this stanza Śāntideva explains the difference in the benefits concerning bodhicitta of aspiration and bodhicitta of application. Bodhicitta of aspiration is endowed with immeasurable benefit and merit. Even while dwelling in saṃsāra, it will lead to great results and fruits. By merely developing bodhicitta of aspiration, one will gain high states within saṃsāra. In the celestial realms one will reach the states of Brahma and Indra, and in the human realms one will become a universal sovereign ['khor los bsgyur ba'i rgyal po].

Bodhicitta of aspiration, however, does not have the same stream of unceasing merit as does bodhicitta of application. Between bodhicitta of aspiration and bodhicitta of application, the latter is of greater power and benefit. Bodhicitta of application results in an uninterrupted stream of meritorious actions such as generosity, discipline, patience, diligence, meditation and wisdom.

Although both types of bodhicitta are motivation only, bodhicitta of aspiration is less powerful since it 'aspires to the fruition' ['bras bu la smon pa] only, while bodhicitta of application 'engages in the causes' [rgyu la 'jug pa]. The latter wishes to engage in an action to ease suffering, while the former merely wishes beings to be free from suffering. Without bodhicitta of aspiration, bodhicitta of application cannot arise. Bodhicitta of application is the wish to engage in an action [lag len la 'jug pa'i blo].

Bodhicitta of aspiration wishes to free all beings from suffering and to establish them on the level of buddhahood. Here, the practitioner must understand the preciousness of buddhahood. A buddha is actualized bodhicitta [byang chub sems mngon du gyur ba]. Buddhahood is the culmination point of bodhicitta. Buddhahood can be described in eight aspects: immeasurable wisdom [ye shes], compassion [snying rje], capacity [nus pa], activity [phrin las], merit [bsod nams], qualities [yon tan], blessings [byin rlabs], and aspirations [smon lam]. These eight aspects are personified within the eight great bodhisattvas. Bodhicitta of application is the commitment: "In order to free all beings from suffering and to establish them on the level of buddhahood, I will engage in such and such perfection, the cause for buddhahood."

When one actually applies relative bodhicitta motivation to the six perfections, the stream of merit is even greater than just practicing bodhicitta motivation alone. While carrying out any of the six perfections, one maintains bodhicitta of application, the commitment to do so. Practicing the six perfections or any kind of virtue without bodhicitta is definitely meritorious but does not bring you closer to enlightenment.

If all actions are embraced by absolute bodhicitta, boundless merit arises. Only then are you practicing the six transcendental perfections. At that point you are truly practicing the unity of the accumulation of merit [bsod nams kyi tshogs] and the accumulation of wisdom [ye shes kyi tshogs]. Through the unified practice of merit and wisdom, the two kāyas [sku gnyis], the dharmakāya [chos sku] and the rūpakāya [gzugs sku], will be revealed.

Absolute bodhicitta is no longer mingled with the poison of ego-clinging [bdag 'dzin gyi dug dang ma 'dres pa]. Practicing the perfections as the causes for enlightenment without any stains of afflictive and cognitive obscurations means that the cause [rgyu] for enlightenment and the fruition ['bras bu], enlightenment itself, come very close together.

Relative bodhicitta is like making fire with wet wood. The cause and the fruition are distant. The wet wood is not the perfect fuel for the fire. Absolute bodhicitta is like making fire with dry wood. Cause and fruition are very close. The dry wood is the perfect fuel.

Relative bodhicitta generates conceptual merit [zag bcas kyi bsod nams]. Absolute bodhicitta generates non-conceptual merit [zag med gyi bsod nams]. The mind that generates relative bodhicitta is impermanent, although the effect of the virtue that has been generated will never be lost [chud mi za ba]. This is because the mental focus [dmigs yul] is perfect enlightenment for all sentient beings. Since all sentient beings will never reach enlightenment, this task will never be completed. So from the beginning of any virtuous action until its completion [bya rdzogs skad cig ma], the merit of this action will never be lost [chud mi za ba]. Relative merit embraced by relative bodhicitta is, therefore, almost like the non-conceptual merit of absolute bodhicitta, since it will never be exhausted.

Bodhicitta causes an 'unceasing stream of merit' [bsod nams kyi rgyun] or an 'uninterrupted stream of virtue' [dge ba rgyun chags pa]. Just as fire is naturally hot, so

bodhicitta is naturally virtuous and meritorious. As a beginner you need to contrive [bcos pa] relative bodhicitta; you must create it artificially. Once you are more accustomed to relative bodhicitta, it will arise naturally and uncontrived [ma bcos pa]. Absolute bodhicitta cannot be contrived but can only be recognized. Once you have become accustomed to the recognition of absolute bodhicitta, it will arise naturally.

Text section 264 / stanza 18:

From the point in time when one has genuinely adopted bodhicitta of application means from the moment one has firmly resolved, "In order to liberate all sentient beings from their suffering, its causes and results, and to establish them on the level of omniscient buddhahood, I will practice generosity, discipline, patience, diligence, meditation or wisdom, any of the six perfections." The main point here is that one makes a firm resolution [thag chod], a stable commitment [dam bca']. One develops the innate certainty [gdengs]: "I will enact the six transcendental perfections for the sake of beings." That resolve is bodhicitta of application. One should receive the bodhicitta vows in a genuine fashion in front of one's master, spiritual guide, or in front of a statue of the Buddha. Actually, a practitioner should take the bodhisattva vow [byang chub sems dpa'i sdom pa] every day.

Text sections 265-266 / stanza 19:

Once the precepts have been received, bodhisattvas protect the precepts through their practice of the six transcendental perfections. They strive to the best of their ability to practice the transcendental perfections. The actual practice of the perfections is called 'application' [sbyor ba]. While maintaining the bodhicitta motivation, the practitioners actually carry out the 'application' [sbyor ba] of the six transcendental perfections.

From that moment on [dus de nas bzung ste] means that from the moment one has made the firm resolution to enact the six transcendental perfections for the benefit of others, one will have an uninterrupted stream of virtue naturally manifesting in one's life. Once that firm resolution of bodhicitta of application has been made, even if one is not actively practicing virtue with one's body or speech but is just lying down asleep or playing around inattentively, the power of merit will uninterruptedly continue to increase.

Bodhicitta of aspiration leads to inconceivable merit but only if you actively meditate on it. Once you have forgotten it, no further merit is generated. But having developed the bodhicitta of application, the irrevocable resolution, "I will enact the six transcendental perfections to my best ability for the benefit of others," that mere motivation will unceasingly generate virtue and merit. After you make such a firm resolution, you will occasionally forget your bodhicitta commitment. Despite forgetting your resolution, however, the power of having made such a resolution will still generate immeasurable merit. Once you have forcefully turned a wheel, even if you do not continue turning it, the wheel will keep on turning for some time.

A beginner who has given up the ten non-virtuous actions [mi dge ba bcu], who observes his practice sessions of the Buddha Śākyamuni liturgy [thug chog] in the morning and evening, who does not indulge in too much food, and who meditates on and practices bodhicitta and the six transcendental perfections to the best of his ability has, according to the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra, embarked on the minor path of accumulations [tshogs lam chung ba], the first of the five paths. Structure your life according to these simple key points, and you have already become a practitioner. It is really not difficult.

When you progress to the path of application, the second of the five paths, your bodhisattva resolve will become stronger and stronger. Once you have attained the first bodhisattva level, the path of seeing, the third path, your bodhicitta resolve will be utterly irrevocable [phyir mi ldog pa'i dam bca']. On this level your bodhisattva resolve is truly genuine [dam bca' mtshan nyid pa]. While you are still on the first two paths, the path of accumulation and the path of application, your bodhisattva resolve is a replica [dam bca' rjes mthun pa]. But that is the way to get started.

Again, this continued stream of virtue occurs only if you have genuinely resolved to enact the six transcendental perfections. If that resolution is the underlying intention in your mind, you will continue to gain infinite virtue and merit even while sleeping, being inattentive, or having temporarily forgotten about it. If you fail to act upon the six transcendental perfections when the chance to do so arises, however, and instead, with a negative frame of mind, close your heart, then you have committed a serious misdeed and have destroyed your bodhisattva vow.

For as long as you try to enact the six transcendental perfections to the best of your ability, you are on the right path. If, however, you purposely ignore every chance to practice the perfections for the welfare of others and constantly act negatively toward others, having lost the intention to help sentient beings, you have destroyed your bodhisattva precepts.

Always maintain the willingness and the intention to help others. Virtue and merit come from your mind. If your mind is imbued with positive and helpful intentions, then you will develop and will naturally accumulate virtue and merit. Use every opportunity you have to practice the six transcendental perfections. If you refuse to apply them when you have the opportunity, you are breaking your promise. First, promising to be generous and then acting in a stingy way is dishonest and deceitful. Nevertheless, keep in mind that you should not practice physical self-sacrifice unless you have reached the first bodhisattva level.

Whenever you have the chance and the means to help or the capacity to abstain from harming others, you, as a bodhisattva, must do so. If you do not have the skill or capacity to carry out a particular perfection, this does not constitute a root downfall [rtsa ltung]. A bodhisattva is also aware that different activities carry different impacts. He would never stop a great beneficial activity for many beings merely to help a single being with an insignificant activity. Thus, he would never interrupt his practice of samādhi, the practice of absolute bodhicitta, to render a minor service to someone.

As practical advice for a beginning bodhisattva, always carry a few coins in your pocket. Whenever you see some beggars or people in need, give them a little money. In your daily life try to encourage others to practice and study the dharma. Always support the dharma practice and activities of others. Never discourage anyone from practicing virtue and goodness. Have a kind word for everyone.

Buddha said that it is much more meritorious to keep strict discipline for a single day in this degenerate age than it was to keep discipline for a long period of time in an era when Buddha was still alive. He said that it is more meritorious to spread the dharma in a country where Buddhism has never been heard of than in a country where Buddhism is well established.

Text section 268 / stanza 20:

Of course the question arises: "How can someone accumulate merit while sleeping?" "Where does such inconceivable merit come from?" In order to answer these questions, Śāntideva quotes from the scriptures [lung], in particular from the Subāhu-paripṛcchā-sūtra, the sūtra requested by Bodhisattva Subāhu, in which the Buddha explains the benefits and qualities of bodhicitta and gives *reasons* ['thad pa].

The phrase *not only for the mere purpose of guiding* [kha drang ba'i don tsam ma yin par] means that this statement regarding the immeasurable benefits of bodhicitta of application is not a statement belonging to the level of 'provisional meaning' [drang don], such as statements the Buddha made to guide the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas, but that it is a statement of the 'definitive meaning' [nges don].

'Provisional meaning' [drang don] refers to statements made by the Buddha in order to lead beings onto the path but which actually have another meaning, as they do not accord with the actual nature of things [dngos po gnas tshul ltar du ma yin pa]. The Buddha uses words like 'I' and 'mine' although 'I' and 'mine' do not exist. He speaks this way in order to communicate on the relative level.

In the Subāhu-paripṛcchā-sūtra the Buddha explained the real qualities [yon tan nges pa] of bodhicitta to enable practitioners to gain certainty [nges shes] and true understanding of what these qualities actually are [nges pa la nges par shes pa]. The Subāhu-paripṛcchā-sūtra is classified as a sūtra concerning the 'ultimate meaning' [nges don gyi mdo / nges pa don gyi mdo], not a sūtra of the 'provisional meaning' [dran don].

Most Hīnayāna sūtras deal the provisional meaning because they do not teach the actual nature of things [dngos po gnas lugs]. In the Tibetan tradition, these sūtras are considered to be meant for beginners in order to lead them onto the path [las dang po pa la kha drang ba'i mdo]. Sūtras which mainly establish the relative truth [kun rdzob bden pa] and give teachings on karma, the law of cause and effect, and the like are classified as belonging to the 'provisional meaning' [drang don]. Sūtras which mainly establish the absolute truth [don dam bden pa], teachings on egolessness [bdag med] and emptiness [stong pa nyid], are classified as belonging to the 'ultimate meaning' [nges

don]. The purpose of the provisional meaning is to lead the minds of beginners to the ultimate meaning [gdul bya'i blo don dam pa la kha drang ba'i phyir du].

The sūtras make many statements about the infinite merit of virtues, although these virtues actually do not have such infinite merit. For instance, in some places it says that if one recites the mantra 'Om Mani Peme Hung' seven times one will gain enlightenment. This kind of statement is meant to guide a beginner into dharma practice. Such statements belong to the 'provisional meaning' [drang don]. This statement actually means that by reciting the mantra 'Om Mani Peme Hung' seven times, at another time [dus gzhan gcig la] in the far distant future one will gain enlightenment. Reciting this mantra seven times plants the seed for enlightenment but does not lead to enlightenment right on the spot.

Generally, bodhisattvas train in the six perfections for three countless aeons in order to manifest all the qualities of Buddha's body, speech and mind. Some of Buddha's students became discouraged and frightened by such an enormous duration of time and felt inclined toward the lesser vehicles of the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas. The śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas aspire not to complete enlightenment but rather to the state of an arhat, a state beyond the suffering of saṃsāra. In order to motivate such individuals, Buddha taught the Subāhu-paripṛcchā-sūtra in which he explained the unceasing merit and inexhaustible qualities of bodhicitta. Buddha gave four reasons for its being unceasing and inexhaustible: 1) the unfathomable number of sentient beings, 2) the unfathomable amount of suffering, 3) the unfathomable qualities of buddhahood, and 4) the unfathomable duration of three countless aeons.

A bodhisattva's focus is not restricted to a few friends, relatives, countrymen or even only to human beings. A bodhisattva's focus extends to all infinite sentient beings, not excluding even one. Bodhisattvas reach out to all beings within the totality of space.

Bodhisattvas do not aspire only to cure a few people from diseases or to help only their followers. They aspire to relieve all infinite sentient beings of their unfathomable amount of suffering. Bodhisattvas are not interested only in improving beings' living conditions, making them comfortable temporarily and bringing them short-lived happiness. They want to establish all sentient beings on the level of complete enlightenment. They want all beings to reach perfect buddhahood, a state endowed with inconceivable qualities, devoid of all defects, a level of permanent bliss.

Bodhisattvas are not active for others for limited periods of time only. They help sentient beings until all beings have been established on the level of omniscience. For three countless aeons they train in the six transcendental perfections, and when they themselves reach complete enlightenment, their buddha activity becomes unceasing.

Dignāga [phyogs kyi glang po] and Dharmakīrti [chos kyi grags pa] established the benefits of bodhicitta through the following logical equations relating to the same four points:

1. The infinite *number of beings who are the objects of focus* [dmigs yul sems can gyi grangs tshad med pa]: "Bodhicitta of application is endowed with immeasurable benefits because it focuses on immeasurable beings" ['jug pa byang chub sems de chos can

bsod nams tshad med pa yod pa thal te sems can tshad med pa la dmigs pa yin pa'i phyir]. The objects of the bodhisattva's focus are the immeasurable number of sentient beings without even one being excluded. The bodhisattva's motivation is: "In order to establish the immeasurable number of sentient beings on the level of perfect enlightenment, I will practice the six transcendental perfections." Therefore, the Indian philosophers concluded that because the bodhisattva focuses on the immeasurable number of beings, immeasurable beings are helped and benefited. Therefore, the benefits of the bodhicitta of application are equally immeasurable.

2. The infinite *amount of suffering, that which is to be dispelled* [bsal bya'i sdug bsngal gyi rnam grangs tshad med pa]: "Bodhicitta of application is endowed with immeasurable benefits because it constantly maintains the motivation to dispel all suffering" [dus rtag tu sdug bsngal thams cad med par gso 'dod yod pa'i phyir]. The amount of suffering is immeasurable, and the bodhisattva constantly generates the motivation to dispel all of the suffering of all sentient beings. Therefore, the benefits of the bodhicitta of application are equally immeasurable.

3. The infinite *qualities of buddhahood, those which are to be obtained* [thob bya sangs rgyas kyi yon tan tshad med pa]: "Bodhicitta of application is endowed with immeasurable benefits because it aspires to free all beings from suffering and to establish them on the level of buddhhood" [sems can thams cad sdug bsngal dang bral 'dod sangs rgyas kyi go 'phang bkod pa'i phyir]. Buddhahood is endowed with immeasurable qualities. The bodhisattva has the aspiration that all beings should attain these immeasurable qualities [thob 'dod yod pa'i phyir]. Therefore, the benefits of the bodhicitta of application are equally immeasurable.

   Inasmuch as buddhahood, the goal of all achievements, is endowed with immeasurable qualities, the cause for its attainment, the bodhicitta of application, must also be endowed with immeasurable merit [thob bya sangs rgyas kyi yon tan tshad med pa'i tshad med pa yin pas na rgyu 'jug pa byang chub gyi sems de yang bsod nams tshad med pa red 'dug].

4. The infinity of the *time-span* [dus tshad med pa]: The bodhisattva has the wish: "I will free all sentient beings from suffering and establish them forever on the level of complete enlightenment." The bodhicitta of application is endowed with immeasurable power [nus pa] because it frees all sentient beings from the suffering of infinite past lifetimes and establishes all beings permanently on the level of complete enlightenment and ultimate bliss.

The magnitude of these considerations—infinite number of beings, infinite amount of suffering, infinite qualities of the Buddha, infinite time-span—expands the mind beyond its conceptual limits. This is one way to approach the non-conceptual state.

Bodhisattvas who constantly work for the benefit of others will always enjoy the unceasing benefits of bodhicitta. Their virtue and merit increase constantly, even while they sleep or are inattentive. The benefits of bodhicitta are present right from the very beginning, immediately on taking the bodhisattva precepts. One does not have to wait

for a long time for the benefits to manifest. Once bodhicitta of application has truly taken root in the minds of practitioners, they will always accumulate merit.

This statement does not imply that someone who has taken the bodhisattva precepts, but who does not do any good at all, will accumulate merit while sleeping or being inattentive. Bodhicitta really must take root in the heart. Practicing virtue for a certain period of time, then leaning back and saying, "Now I have done enough. I can take it easy and relax," is not the bodhisattva's way of practice.

You cannot take a job, sit around all day in the office doing nothing, and still expect to get paid at the end of the month. The bodhisattva attitude implies the earnest wish to practice as much virtue as possible. In that way, the momentum of merit will always carry through. However, receiving the bodhisattva precepts and not practicing virtue at all is a major downfall [rtsa ltung] for a bodhisattva and will create negative karma.

Text section 269:

The phrase *if I don the armor* [go bgos na] means 'if I put on the harness of courage' [snying stobs kyi go cha bgos na] and connotes 'commitment' [dam bca' ba].

Text section 270:

There are four principles of reasoning [rigs pa rnam pa bzhi; skr. yukti-catuṣṭayam]:[1541] 1) the principle of reality [ngo bo chos nyid kyi rigs pa; skr. dharmatā-yukti]; 2) the principle of efficacy [bya ba byed pa'i rigs pa; skr. kāryakāraṇa-yukti]; 3) the principle of dependency ['bras bu ltos pa'i rigs pa; skr. apekṣā-yukti]; and 4) the principle of valid proof ['thad pa sgrub pa'i rigs pa; skr. upapattisādhana-yukti]. These four principles of reasoning constitute a very extensive subject which cannot be exhaustively considered at this point. Therefore, we will give only a short definition:

1. The principle of reality: This reasoning considers the reasoning of natural conditions of things. For example, the natural condition [chos nyid] of fire is to be hot. Nobody can deny that fire is hot.
2. The principle of efficacy [bya ba byed pa'i rigs pa]: This reasoning considers the causes [rgyu la ltos pa'i rigs pa] their consequences. This reasoning is based on the fact that 'if something exists, it will lead to something else' [gang zhig yod na gang zhig byung ba 'gyur ba]; and 'if this exists, then that must arise' ['di yod na 'di byung dgos]. A cause inevitably leads to a result [rgyu yod na 'bras bu byung dgos red]. For example, when the sun rises, darkness is dispelled.
3. The principle of dependency ['bras bu ltos pa'i rigs pa]: This reasoning considers dependent production, the result. A result or fruition ['bras bu] must always rely on a cause [rgyu la ltos dgos]. For example, when there is no mother, there will be no child. A child can only come about by having a mother. This reasoning is based on

[1541] See *Reason's Traces*, pages 320-322.

the fact that 'if something does not exist, it cannot lead to something else' [gang zhig med na gang zhig mi byung ba]. 'If this does not exist, that cannot arise' ['di med na 'di yong gi ma red].

4. The principle of valid proof ['thad pa sgrub pa'i rigs pa]: This reasoning uses the three former types of reasoning to refute wrong statements. For instance, if someone states, 'Fire is cold', the first principle of reasoning refutes this since such a statement contradicts the reasoning of reality or of natural conditions. By means of 'valid proof' ['thad pa] one checks whether or not a statement is correct. This principle of valid proof uses 'the three means of valid cognition' [tshad ma gsum]: 1) the validity of direct perception [mngon sum tshad ma; skr. pratyakṣa-pramāṇa], 2) the validity of deduction or inference [rjes dpag tshad ma; skr. anumāna-pramāṇa] and 3) the valid cognition of scriptural authority [lung gi tshad ma; skr. āgama-pramāṇa].[1542]

Text section 271:

The real working of karma, the law of cause and effect, can be seen only by a fully enlightened buddha and is therefore called *a most hidden field of knowledge* [shes bya shin tu lkog gyur].[1543] Regarding the law of karma, for the most part we must simply trust in the words of the Buddha. Although establishing the law of karma through reasoning is difficult, it is not impossible. However, considerable study and wisdom-knowledge are required.

The benefits of bodhicitta can be established by reasoning, since the Buddha taught extensively on its benefits and qualities. Numerous jataka tales, stories of Buddha's previous lives as a bodhisattva, teach about the benefits and qualities of bodhicitta with regard to the law of karma. Reasoning in this context refers to the irrefutable wisdom of the Buddha as preserved in the scriptures [lung; skr. āgama]. When the Buddha relates a story from one of his former lifetimes, the logical implications of that story are considered 'reasoning' by Tibetan scholars because the Buddhist scriptures can always be subject to a three-fold analysis [dpyad pa gsum]: 1) the analysis through the validity of direct perception [mngon sum tshad mas dpyad pa], 2) the analysis through the validity of inference [rjes dpag tshad mas dpyad pa], and 3) the analysis through [khas len snga phyi 'gal mi 'gal dpyad pa].

Text sections 272-273:

This is the Maitrakanyakāvanāna [mdza' bo'i bu mo'i rtogs par brjod pa], 'the Story of Maitra's Daughter', found in *Kalpalatā* [dpag bsam 'khri shing] written by Kṣemendra

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[1542] The four means of valid cognition [tshad ma rnam pa bzhi] include 'the valid cognition demonstrated through examples' [dper nyer 'jal kyi tshad ma].

[1543] Fields of knowledge [shes bya] can be 'directly perceptible' [mngon sum; skr. pratyakṣa], 'imperceptible' or 'hidden' [lkog gyur; skr. parokṣa] and 'radically inaccessible', 'radically imperceptible' or 'most hidden' [shin tu lkog gyur; atyanta-parokṣa]. See *Scripture, Logic, Language*, page 29.

[dge ba'i dbang po] as story 92. In former times, in the city of Vārāṇasī, there lived a wealthy leader [ded dpon] of the sea-going merchant caste named Maitra [mdza' bo], 'Friend'.[1544] It was his profession to undertake dangerous journeys by sea in order to fetch precious gems. His wife gave birth to a son. To prevent their son from following his father's dangerous occupation, Maitra and his wife named him Kanyaka, 'Daughter' [bu mo]. Thus, he became known as Maitrakanyaka, 'Daughter of Maitra' [mdza' bo'i bu mo]. Soon after his son was born, Maitra died at sea.

Maitrakanyaka's mother did everything she could to keep her son from becoming captain of a ship but to no avail. When finally Maitrakanyaka was about to go to sea, his mother tried to physically hold him back, and he kicked her in the head. The karmic ripening for this deed was an iron wheel that came spinning down on his head, cutting into it and causing him unbearable pain. Due to the merit of his previous lifetimes, he developed compassion and thought, "In the realms of saṃsāra many other beings are suffering like me for kicking their mothers in the head. May all their suffering ripen on me and may I alone bear it for all of them. May none of the others ever again experience such pain in any of their lifetimes." Due to the power of his compassion and this benefiting intention, the wheel flew into the air, his agony ceased, and he was reborn in the realms of the gods.

When Maitrakanyaka thought, "May all the suffering of those who experience the fruition of kicking their mothers in the head ripen on me, and may none of them experience such suffering again," he had developed compassion, not bodhicitta.[1545]

Text section 274-275 / stanza 21 and 22:

Both stanzas twenty-one and twenty-two allude to this story. If the mere intention to benefit a few people, such as the intention of Maitrakanyaka, is endowed with boundless merit, even without actually doing anything to relieve their pain, then how much greater will be the boundless merit of the bodhisattvas, who wish to free all sentient beings from their suffering and to establish them on the level of perfect buddhahood?

By simply having the beneficial intention to relieve the suffering of a few people, you already gain enough merit to achieve rebirth in the god realms. The wish of the bodhisattvas, however, who strive to relieve all sentient beings of their individual and personal suffering, and who strive to establish all sentient beings, without excluding a single one, on the level of perfect enligthenment, is endowed with boundless qualities. Such a boundless wish brings equally boundless merit.

1544 The Tibetan term mdza' bo can also be translated with 'Vallabha', a Sanskrit synonym for 'Maitra'. But in the context of the Maitrakanyakāvanāna, the proper translation of mdza' bo is Maitra or Mitra.

1545 For a translation of the Sanskrit version written by Ārya Śūra see *Maitrakanyakāvadāna*. Paltrül Rinpoche paraphrases Kṣemendra's version in *Words of My Perfect Teacher*, pages 224-226.

Another story shows the power of merit of a compassionate mind. Once a daughter and her mother fell into the river Ganga. The mother, while she was drowning, thought only about saving her daughter; the daughter thought only about saving her mother. Neither thought about saving her own life, and they both drowned, but due to the merit of their benefiting intention, they were born in the god realms. To this very day, people in India jump into the river Ganga and commit suicide with the wrong view that the blessing of this holy river will take them to the god realms. They do not realize that it is not the river that causes rebirth in the god realms but the power of one's altruistic motivation alone.

Once buddhahood is achieved, one has acquired the actual power to dispel the suffering of beings. This means that a buddha forms the 'condition to dispel misery' [sdug bsngal bsal ba'i rkyen] and the 'condition to accomplish happiness' [bde ba thob pa'i rkyen] for all beings. The causes for attaining happiness [bde ba thob pa'i rgyu] must be created by sentient beings themselves. The Buddha provides the perfect condition by showing the path to enlightenment. Though the Buddha showers all sentient beings constantly with his blessings, beings need to walk the path to enlightenment themselves. Beings are supported on the path by the Buddha, but they themselves have to overcome their obscurations and actualize their innate buddha nature. It is not the case that the blessings and powers of the Buddha relieve beings of all their suffering. Under the perfect guidance of the Buddha, beings must traverse the path to enlightenment themselves.

> Even though I am the Muni, I can neither wash away deeds
> Nor wipe off the suffering of beings with my hand.
> Although I cannot transfer my realization to others,
> I can lead them to liberation through my teachings on the peace of the natural state.

> thub pas sdig pa chu yis mi 'khrud la //
> 'gro ba'i sdug bsngal phyag gis mi sel zhing //
> nyid kyis rtogs pa gzhan la spo min yang //
> chos nyid zhi ba bstan pas grol bar 'gyur //

A buddha can only reach beings with whom he has a connection through his aspirations from former lifetimes when he was still a bodhisattva. When the good karma of beings and the aspirations of a buddha ripen, beings may reach instant realization. That is reported in life stories of the Buddha and the great masters. But again, this reflects a strong connection from former lifetimes. For us, our bad karma has placed us at some distance from the Buddha. Through our practice and aspirations, however, we can move closer quickly. The blessing of the Buddha works constantly in our minds, whether or not we are aware of it. The blessing of the Buddha creates the circumstances [rkyen] for the force of negative thoughts and emotions to decrease and for virtuous thoughts and emotions to increase.

The activities of Buddha's body, speech and mind enter into the mind-streams of beings. His teaching activity is described by the great Tibetan master Gorampa: "Sounds, words and letters appear in the individual mind-streams of the audience on the basis of a buddha as a condition" [bdag rkyen sangs rgyas la brten te gdul bya'i de nyid gyi blo sgra tshig yi ge'i rnam par snang ba'o].

Text sections 276-277 / stanza 23:

Even parents, considered to be the most well-meaning beings in the world, as they wish their children to be well and successful, lack bodhicitta of aspiration, the benefiting intention of bodhisattvas, who wish to establish all beings on the level of perfect buddhahood. Parents wish the best for their children, but their aspirations are very limited and concern only this life.

One might say that parents, being unlearned, simply lack knowledge about bodhicitta. The great sages and gods, however, who have the five worldly supernatural perceptions [zag bcas kyi mngon shes lnga], should because of this be knowledgable about bodhicitta. Nethertheless, even the great sages learned in *the eighteen great fields of knowledge* [rig pa'i gnas chen bco brgyad] and the gods like Brahma, who possess the five worldly supernatural perceptions, lack bodhicitta. While Brahma has compassion and love for those beings that have taken rebirth in his sphere, he does not have this compassion and love for all sentient beings.

The eighteen great fields of knowledge [rig pa'i gnas chen bco brgyad] are:[1546] 1) musical instruments [rol mo], 2) amorous dalliance ['khrig thabs], 3) family maintenance ['tsho tshis], 4) calculation [grangs], 5) Sanskrit [sgra], 6) medicine [gso spyad], 7) rules of behavior [chos lugs], 8) fine arts [bzo], 9) martial arts ['phongs], 10) philosophy [gtan tshigs], 11) yoga [rnal 'byor], 12) scholasticism [thos pa], 13) memorization [dran pa], 14) predictions based on stars [skar ma'i spyad], 15) astrology [rtsis mig], 16) yantra-yoga ['phrul 'khor], 17) ancient epics [sngon rabs], and 18) historical analysis [sngon byung rigs].

Text section 278 / stanza 24:

The four states of Brahma [tshangs pa'i gnas pa bzhi; skr. brahma vihāra] are four stages of meditative absorption upon the following: loving kindness [byams pa; skr. maitrī], compassion [snying rje; skr. karuṇā], sympathetic joy [dga' ba skr. muditā], and equanimity [btang snyoms; upekṣā]. These four absorptions are within the mind of the god Brahma, who dwells on the first dhyāna [bsam gtan] within the seventeen realms of form [gzugs khams gnas ris bcu bdun]. There are countless beings within the reaches of space [nam mkha'i khams] who have reached the first dhyāna and who have taken rebirth as a Brahma god. These Brahma gods have not the slightest idea about bodhicitta.

1546 *shes bya kun khyab bar cha*, page 300.

The god Brahma believes that all celestial beings who have taken rebirth in his realm have come into existence due to his power [nus pa]; consequently, he regards them all as his children. That is his motivation for considering the beings in his realm with kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity. Even the great gods like Brahma and Indra, however, lack bodhicitta, the wish to establish all sentient beings on the level of complete enlightenment. This is not so surprising since the śrāvakas and pratyekabuddhas also lack bodhicitta.

Buddha taught the meditation on *the four immeasurables* [tshad med bzhi]: immeasurable kindness [byams pa tshad med], immeasurable compassion [snying rje tshad med], immeasurable sympathetic joy [dga' ba tshad med], and immeasurable equanimity [btang snyoms tshad med]. The Hīnayāna system teaches the meditation on the *four states of Brahma*, while Mahāyāna teaches *the four immeasurables*, which are qualities of the Buddha [sangs rgyas kyi yon tan]. The four states of Brahma are measurable [tshad yod pa], since Brahma's compassion and love extend only to those beings reborn in his realm. The four immeasurable qualities of the Buddha are truly immeasurable [tshad med pa] since they include all sentient beings.

The god Brahma is not endowed with the four immeasurable qualities of the Buddha. The four states of Brahma are very limited compared to the four immeasurable qualities of the Buddha. There are four particular reasons why the four states of Brahma are not called 'immeasurable' [skr. apramāṇa]: 1) they are not embraced by the intention of renunciation [nges 'byung gi bsam pas ma zin pa], 2) they are not embraced by bodhicitta [byang chub kyi sems kyis ma zin pa], 3) they are not embraced by the view of emptiness [stong nyid kyi lta bas ma zin pa] and 4) they are not embraced by the wisdom that has realized the absence of an ego [bdag med rtogs pa'i shes rab kyis ma zin pa]. At the time of the path, while on the way to enlightenment, the four immeasurables belong to 'the thirty-seven factors conducive for enlightenment' [byang chub phyogs kyi chos sum cu rtsa bdun].[1547] At the time of fruition, once we have reached enlightenment, the four immeasurables are four qualities of the Buddha.[1548] The lines of the four immeasurables are:

1547 The thirty-seven factors conducive for enlightenment [byang phyogs so bdun] are: the four applications of mindfulness [dran pa nyer bzhag bzhi], the four right endeavors [yang dag spong ba bzhi], the four legs of miracles [rdzu 'phrul gyi rkang pa bzhi], the five pure faculties [rnam byang dbang po lnga], the five pure powers [rnam byang gi stobs lnga], the seven factors of enlightenment [byang chub yan lag bdun], and the noble eightfold path ['phags lam yan lag brgyad]. For a detailed discussion of the thirty-seven factors conducive for enlightenment see *Gateway to Knowledge Vol. III.*, pages 198-205.

1548 See also *Nāgārjuna's Letter*, page 64: "These four attitudes are called "immeasurable" (apramāṇa), both because their object is an immeasurable number of sentient beings and because the person who meditates upon them acquires immeasurable merit." See further *kun bzang bla ma'i zhal lung gi zin bris*, page 194: "They are called 'immeasurable' because 1) the object of their focus is immeasurable [dmigs pa'i yul tshad med], 2) because the form they take in the mind is immeasurable [rnam pa'i blo tshad med], and 3) because their result is immeasurable [de'i 'bras bu tshad med pa]."

May all beings have happiness and the causes for happiness.
May they be free from suffering and the causes for suffering.
May they never be separated from sublime happiness devoid of suffering.
May they remain in boundless equanimity, without attachment to friends or aversion to enemies.

sems can thams cad bde ba dang bde ba'i rgyu dang ldan par gyur cig
sdug bsngal dang sdug bsngal gyi rgyu dang bral bar gyur cig
sdug bsngal med pa'i bde ba dam pa dang mi'bral bar gyur cig
nye ring chags sdang gnyis dang bral ba'i btang snyoms la gnas par gyur cig

Making the wish, "May all sentient beings be free from suffering and the causes for suffering," is to focus with compassion on benefiting others [snying rjes gzhan don la dmigs pa]. This is the compassion aspect of the bodhicitta motivation. Making the wish, "May all beings have happiness and the causes of happiness," is to focus with knowledge on perfect enlightenment [shes rab kyis rdzogs byang la dmigs pa]. This is the knowledge aspect of the bodhicitta motivation. 'Happiness' [bde ba] here refers to the temporary happiness of the higher realms as well as to the ultimate happiness of liberation.

The cause for the temporary happiness of the higher realms within saṃsāra is virtue that concords with worldly merit, such as the ten virtuous actions. The cause for the happiness of the arhats and pratyekabuddhas is virtue that concords with the liberation of Hīnayāna. And the cause for the 'sublime happiness' of the buddhas and bodhisattvas is virtue that concords with the liberation of Mahāyāna. That latter happiness refers to virtue that is embraced by bodhicitta and by the realization of profound emptiness.

Every practitioner of Buddha's teaching should practice the four immeasurables on a daily basis. When you meditate on the four immeasurables, you should include all sentient beings, expanding your mind to all dimensions at the same time. Connect to all infinite sentient beings. Penetrate the infinity of space with your 'wisdom eye' [ye shes kyi mig], also called the 'eye of space' [nam mkha'i mig]. View all infinite world systems. Generate sincere love, compassion, joy and equanimity.

A person who meditates on the four immeasurables can never be harmed by a spirit or a demon, and such a person accumulates inconceivable merit. Someone who presents a gift or an offering to a practitioner who is meditating on these four immeasurables will also receive inconceivable merit. The four immeasurables are a very powerful practice, which creates the conditions for quickly attaining the realization of egolessness. When you generate great devotion, love or compassion, dualistic mind naturally stops, and you have a perfect chance to recognize mind nature. But if a practitioner only develops the different stages of mental stillness [zhi gnas] based on these four immeasurables, without having embraced his practice by the abovementioned four particular qualities of the four immeasurables, he will take

rebirth in one of the four dhyāna states. [1549] For a practitioner of the Mahāyāna path it is crucial not to confuse the practice of the four immeasurables with the practice of the four states of Brahma.

Mental training [blo sbyong] in the four immeasurables brings bodhicitta about easily. Thus, the four immeasurables are a cause [rgyu] for bodhicitta. Although gods and great sages of India had higher perceptions and might have known about teachings on bodhicitta, their own ego-clinging was too strong to allow them to show any interest in bodhicitta. Actually, fathers, mothers, sages and gods—none of them even in their dreams—have the wish to free all beings from suffering and to establish them on the level of complete buddhahood. They all lack the vastly benefiting intention of bodhicitta. Without even the goal to attain enlightenment for their own sake, how could they have the wish to establish all beings on the level of perfect buddhahood?

One of the Brahma gods, together with Bodhisattva Vajrapāṇi, assists all the one thousand buddhas of this fortunate aeon. That particular god Brahma is a bodhisattva and knows about bodhicitta. He requests each of the thousand buddhas to turn the wheel of dharma.

Text section 280 / stanza 25:

Bodhicitta is the exalted jewel of mind, the king among thoughts. *That it has now taken birth in my mind is an unprecedented wonder*, as miraculous as the wish-granting tree of the gods appearing in the human world. Relative bodhicitta [kun rdzob byang chub sems] arises through the power of a spiritual friend [grogs pa'i stobs], through the power of the cause [rgyu stobs], through the power of the root [rtsa ba'i stobs], through the power of studying [thos pa'i stobs], and through the power of familiarization with virtue [dge ba goms stobs]. See Khenpo Chöga's commentary on 'development of relative bodhicitta, achieved through tangible indicators' at text section 242-247.

The 'power of the root' refers to compassion since the development of bodhicitta is based on compassion. Compassion leads to bodhicitta. 'Nying-je' [snying rje], the Tibetan term for compassion, means the 'foremost quality of the heart'. Someone who has accumulated many negative deeds in former lifetimes may find it impossible to develop bodhicitta in this life. Due to former negative deeds that person will have only negative thoughts and inclinations. Therefore, training in the methods for gathering the two accumulations [tshogs gnyis] and for purifying the two obscurations [sgrib pa gnyis] is extremely important.

Practicing the 'seven branch service' [yan lag bdun pa] builds up the positive conditions in the mind necessary for bodhicitta to arise. The seven branch service is: 1) the branch of presenting offerings [mchod pa 'bul ba'i yan lag], 2) the branch of paying respect [phyag 'tshal ba'i yan lag], 3) the branch of confessing negative deeds [sdig pa bshags pa'i

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[1549] For detailed meditation instructions on the four immeasurables see *Words of My Perfect Teacher*, pages 195-217.

yan lag], 4) the branch of rejoicing [rjes su yi rang ba'i yan lag], 5) the branch of requesting the buddhas to turn the wheel of dharma [chos 'khor bskor bar bskul ba'i yan lag], 6) the branch of requesting the buddhas not to enter into nirvāṇa [mya ngan las mi 'da' bar gsol ba 'debs pa'i yan lag], and 7) the branch of dedicating the roots of virtue for the benefit of others [dge rtsa gzhan don du bngos ba'i yan lag]. The practices of the seven branch service are explained in great detail in chapters two and three of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra.

Text sections 281-282 / stanza 26:

The merit of bodhicitta of application cannot be fathomed for the following reasons: 1) the reaches of space are immeasurable [nam mkha'i mtha' tshad med pa], 2) the number of sentient beings is immeasurable [sems can gyi grangs tshad med pa], 3) the suffering of sentient beings is immeasurable [sems can gyi sdgu bsngal tshad med pa], 4) the qualities of the Buddha are immeasurable [sangs rgyas kyi yon tan tshad med pa] , and 5) time is immeasurable [dus tshad med pa]. By contemplating on these five immeasurable objects, you realize that the qualities of bodhicitta of application are equally immeasurable and, therefore, cannot be fathomed.

Sentient beings are said to exist as far as space extends. To the farthest reaches wherein sentient beings exist, there also do exist karma and afflictions [las dang nyon mongs pa]. To the farthest reaches wherein karma and afflictions exist, there also does suffering exist. Three kinds of suffering [sdug bsngal gsum] torment sentient beings: suffering of change ['gyur ba'i sdug bsngal], suffering upon suffering [sdug bsngal gyi sdug bsngal], and suffering in the making [khyab pa 'du shes kyi sdug bsngal].

In a logical argument one would say, "The subject under consideration, bodhicitta [byang chub sems chos can], has infinite benefits [chos la phan yon tshad med pa thal ste] because it focuses on the five immeasurable qualities [chos tshad med pa lnga la dmigs pa yin pa'i phyir]." If one states that the wish to merely relieve the headaches of other beings has merit without bounds, then it is only logical that the wish to free all beings from suffering and to establish them on the level of perfect buddhahood has much greater merit.

Buddha himself repeatedly taught about the importance of precious bodhicitta. He did so to inspire his followers to generate the bodhicitta attitude constantly. Generating bodhicitta is not at all difficult. Once you have become used to it, you should remember it as often as possible during your daily activities. Beginners as well as old practitioners should read this commentary on the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra frequently and fuse their minds with the contents of this text. The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is not a book to be studied for a few months or years and then to be left behind when one moves on to the next book. This book should accompany you through your entire life, until the very end. Its ultimate purpose is the attainment of enlightenment.

Text section 283:

In the quote from the Samādhi-rāja-sūtra the phrase a *loving mind* or a *mind of kindness* [byams pa'i sems] refers to a mind infused with immeasurable kindness [byams pa tshad med] that thinks, "May all beings have happiness and the causes for happiness." The merit of generating such a kind attitude only once surpasses by far the merit gained by offering boundless myriads of offerings to boundless numbers of buddhas every day. The phrase *does not match* [char mi phod pa] literally means 'does not come close to' [phyogs su mi nye ba] and connotes 'cannot even compete in the slightest way' [phyogs su yang 'gran thub gi ma red].

What benefits your mind most is what bears the most merit. When you genuinely develop a mind of loving kindness, your mind will become open and peaceful. If you present great offerings, the danger still exists that you might develop pride and arrogance, thinking, "I have offered the supreme offerings. No one gathers merit like I do."

A practitioner whose mind is absorbed in meditation on kindness is also a supreme object for receiving offerings. If you present offerings to such a yogin, the karmic fruition will ripen for you in this very life. If a mind of kindness is so powerful, there is no need to mention the much greater benefits of bodhicitta of application.

Text section 284 / stanza 27:

A *merely benefiting intention* [phan par bsams pa tsam] is the same as a mind of kindness. The benefiting intention of wishing all beings to be endowed with happiness bears more merit than offering the seven gems to the Buddha in person. Actually, the Buddha himself needs no offerings at all. He experiences no difference whether or not he receives offerings. For the Buddha there is no difference between a mere stone and a nugget of gold. For example, were one person to anoint the Buddha with fragrant substances on one side of his body, while another peeled off his flesh on the other side, the Buddha would regard both people in exactly the same way—with compassion. If he reacted to the first person with positive feelings and to the second with aversion, he would not be a buddha.

The best offering you can present to the Buddha is to enter onto the path to enlightenment and to treat beings with kindness. That is why a mind of kindness or a mind that trains in any of the four immeasurables is superior to presenting many material offerings to the Buddha. Cultivating such a mind supercedes offering all seven gems to all the buddhas. The reason for presenting offerings to the Buddha is to open up your mind and to reduce your own clinging to material possessions.

The seven precious substances [rin po che sna bdun] are: 1) ruby [pad ma ra ga], 2) sapphire [in dra li la], 3) lapis lazuli / beryl [bai dur ya], 4) emerald [mar gad], 5) diamond [rdo rje pha lam], 6) pearl [mu tig], and 7) coral [byu ru]. Another listing of the seven precious substances is: 1) lapis lazuli / beryl [bai dur ya], 2) gold [gser], 3) silver [dngul], 4) crystal [rdo shel], 5) quartz [spug], 6) red pearl [mu tig dmar po], and 7) emerald [rdo'i snying po / mar gad].

That bodhicitta of application—striving for the happiness of all beings, practicing the six perfections so that they all may reach the level of complete buddhahood—is far superior to presenting material offerings to the Buddha goes without saying. The first two lines of stanza twenty-seven refer to the four immeasurables, the bodhicitta of aspiration, and the latter two refer to the bodhicitta of application.

Bodhicitta of application is the resolution: "In order to liberate all sentient beings from their suffering, its causes and results, and to establish them on the level of omniscient buddhahood, I will practice generosity, discipline, patience, diligence, meditation or wisdom, any of the six perfections." Bodhicitta of application is committing to the causes [rgyu la dam bca' ba 'jug pa byang chub sems] for the attainment of enlightenment and is stronger than bodhicitta of aspiration, which is committing to the fruition ['bras bu la dam bca' ba smon pa byang chub sems].

Many practitioners spend considerable time arranging offerings on their shrines, becoming greatly involved with paraphernalia. Taking the teachings of Śāntideva to heart, however, true practitioners should mainly transform their minds internally. Buddha's teachings are about a change of heart. Material offerings, shrine arrangements, extensive ceremonial paraphernalia are secondary means [yan lag tsam gyis], the external aspect of practices to gather merit. Becoming over-involved in the outer aspects of Buddhist practice, you can easily lose the practice of the heart. As Milarepa said:

> Do not let virtuous practices of body and voice become too many
> As the non-conceptual wisdom is in danger of vanishing.
>
> lus ngag gi dge sbyor ma mang zhig
> mi rtog ye shes yal nyen yod

Śāntideva was a yogin of utter simplicity. He owned nothing at all. He had no shrine and no ritual instruments. Nevertheless, he became an enlightened being. The average Tibetan still has difficulty believing in Śāntideva's teaching of simplicity. They would rather trust in extensive rituals and offerings. Many people find it difficult to accept that a moment of kindness extended to all sentient beings is truly superior to presenting offerings to all the buddhas. When ordinary Tibetans talk about great merit they mean building temples, stūpas and statues. They strongly believe in the 'external dharma'.

Only very few practitioners live their lives according to the 'internal dharma' [nang gi chos]. The Buddha taught only the internal dharma, and Śāntideva practiced only the internal dharma. The yogins and masters of old practiced only the internal dharma. Nowadays, Buddhists have an overly strong focus on the external dharma, and the internal dharma is in danger of becoming lost. Śāntideva is not saying that it is useless to present offerings. He is merely saying that developing bodhicitta is more beneficial.

Text sections 285-286 / stanza 28:

All beings strive for happiness. Not knowing the causes for happiness, however, they constantly run toward misery. In their ignorance they behave like butterflies diving into flames. Exclusively pursuing sense gratification, beings bring on their own suffering. Their wish for happiness and the conduct they engage in to achieve happiness are diametrically opposed to each other. By constantly carrying out the ten non-virtuous deeds, they destroy the causes for their own happiness. In that way, they annihilate their own happiness in this and future lives. Sentient beings through their conduct seem to regard their own happiness as their worst enemy. They constantly destroy the causes for their own happiness.

Text section 287 / Stanza 29:

Beings are rich in misery and impoverished in happiness. *Destitute* [phongs ba] means to be poor in the sense of being without happiness [bde ba] and the causes for happiness [bde ba'i rgyu]. The causes for happiness are roots of virtue [dge ba'i rtsa ba], which beings lack. On top of that, they are endowed with suffering [sdug bsngal] and the causes for suffering [sdug bsngal gyi rgya]. The causes for suffering are negative deeds [sdig pa] and non-virtuous actions [mi dge ba]. Of these beings have plenty.

Therefore, such beings must be called *miserable ones* [nyams thag pa]. These are the object of focus [dmigs yul] for the bodhisattva, since bodhicitta can bring all states of happiness to beings and cuts them loose from the stream of suffering in this and all future lifetimes. Bodhicitta grants *temporary happiness* [gnas skabs kyi bde ba], which refers to rebirth in the higher states of saṃsāra, in the realms of humans and gods. It also grants *ultimate happiness* [mthar thug gi bde ba], which refers to the attainment of complete enlightenment. The ultimate happiness and bliss is an unchanging bliss [mi 'gyur ba'i bde ba], also called supreme bliss [mchog tu gyur ba'i bde ba].

Thus, with *great kindness* [byams pa chen po] and love [brtse ba] bodhicitta cares for all these miserable ones, satisfying them with temporary and ultimate happiness. To *satisfy* [tshim par byed pa] beings with ultimate bliss means to establish them on the level of buddhahood [sangs rgyas kyi go 'phan la bkod pa]. With *great compassion* [snying rje chen po] bodhicitta cuts through the stream of suffering.

Text sections 288-290 / stanza 30:

The reason that beings constantly dwell in misery and lack happiness is their ignorance of the law of karma, the law of cause and effect. They do not know that virtuous deeds lead to happiness and that non-virtuous deeds lead to suffering. Bodhicitta clears away this ignorance with its *great knowledge* [shes rab chen po]. Therefore, *no other power of virtue* [dge ba stobs mtshungs gzhan] can compare to bodhicitta. There is also no spiritual *friend* [bshes] comparable to bodhicitta and no merit that compares to bodhicitta.

The Tibetan term for merit is 'sönam' [bsod nams], 'that which has the capacity to eliminate suffering and has the power of virtue' [mi mthun pa'i phyogs med pa bsod thub pa dang dge ba'i nams pa'am nus pa dang ldan pa]. Merit connotes something with the

power [nus pa] of increasing happiness [bde ba] and virtue [dge ba] while eliminating suffering [sdug bsngal] and negative deeds [sdig pa].

Stanza twenty-nine and stanza thirty teach three special qualities [khyad chos gsum] of the bodhicitta of application. 1) Due to its great kindness [byams pa chen po], bodhicitta brings temporary and ultimate happiness to all miserable beings. 2) Due to its great compassion [snying rje chen po], bodhicitta disrupts the stream of suffering for this and all future lifetimes. And 3) bodhicitta clears away ignorance about the law of karma, the law of cause and effect. Due to its great wisdom-knowledge [shes rab chen po], bodhicitta teaches what to adopt and what to avoid. Therefore, bodhicitta is known as the 'internal teacher' [nang gi bla ma / nang gi yongs 'dzin].

All these qualities of bodhicitta apply to the bodhisattva whose mind is infused with bodhicitta. Because the bodhisattva's mind is endowed with bodhicitta, he can teach beings the path to happiness. He can show them the way out of suffering and instruct them what to do and what to avoid.

Once a practitioner has understood bodhicitta's great qualities, he will not be able to live without bodhicitta. To gain certainty about bodhicitta's benefits, again and again one must meditate on each individual quality of bodhicitta, explained in this first chapter. Only then will a practitioner be inspired to train in the bodhicitta motivation and its application, the six transcendental perfections. Mere scholastic and theoretical understanding will not lead to practice, to a change of heart.

Text section 291 / stanza 31:

From stanzas thirty-one through thirty-six, Śāntideva explains the qualities [yon tan] and the greatness [che ba] of a person endowed with a mind that has developed bodhicitta. In doing this, he distinguishes the bodhisattva from someone who is considered a good person in a worldly context.

In a worldly context, if someone has done you a favor and you return this favor, you are considered a good person since you did not forget the kindness that was done to you. It is said, "Returning a favor received delights the gods." Bodhisattvas help and benefit beings without having been helped by others in the first place. Their motivation to help others is based neither on gratitude nor on the duty to return a favor. If the world praises those who help others in return for favors received, it is needless to mention how much more worthy of praise are the bodhisattvas who help all sentient beings without having ever received the help of others.

Bodhisattvas do not expect any reward from their actions of benefiting others, and they help without being asked. They have only one thought—to free all beings from suffering and to establish them on the level of complete enlightenment.

Text section 292 / stanza 32:

In India the custom still exists of giving donations of food to a group of poor people. A benefactor, for instance, will give food to a group of maybe five hundred beggars.

Limiting one's generosity to only one particular group is called generosity toward an *inferior object* [yul dman pa], or toward an inferior object of focus [dmigs yul dman pa].

A sponsor might donate food continuously, *a constant food supply* [nar ma'i zas / nam rgyun gyi zas], for a limited period, like a year, six months and so forth. He might also give food just once, his generosity continuing for the time-span it takes to complete the action [bya rdzogs skar cig ma] of giving the food. To limit one's generosity to a certain and limited period of time is called generosity with an *inferior time-span* [dus dman pa]. What the donor gives is merely food, which is called an *inferior substance* [dngos po dman pa].

This custom of feeding beggars is practiced all over the world. People merely donate food, *without donating any valuable gifts* [yon 'bul ba med pa] such as money or gold, which could truly change the lives of those who are hungry. The donation of food might be made in a condescending way, shouting at the recipients or even beating them. This style of generosity is called *inferior application* [sbyor ba dman pa]. The benefit achieved is that the recipients will have a full stomach for half a day. That is called *inferior benefit* [phan 'dogs dman pa]. Nevertheless, in a worldly context, such benefactors are praised by other people as having accomplished great virtue.

In the old days in India the local kings would always collect taxes from their subjects. Then, to improve their own image, they would sometimes announce a great spectacle of generosity and give food to all their subjects. That kind of generosity is really not amazing. First, the king takes money from his subjects, then he gives them a meal in return.

Text section 293 / stanza 33:

The bodhisattvas do not limit their generosity to a certain group of people but benefit all infinite sentient beings. They are benefactors not only for a limited period of time but indefinitely. What the bodhisattvas donate is not an inferior substance; they give the peerless bliss [bde ba bla na med pa] of the buddhas, the sugatas, to all beings. They bestow their gifts upon sentient beings in a most peaceful and respectful way. They bestow not inferior assistance, but they grant fulfillment of all the wishes of all sentient beings. Therefore, it is needless to mention how praiseworthy these bodhisattvas are. These last three stanzas, thirty-one through thirty-three, show the bodhisattvas to be exceptionally praiseworthy.

There are different levels of bliss: the bliss of an ordinary being, the bliss of an arhat, the bliss of a pratyekabuddha, the bliss of a bodhisattva, and the bliss of a buddha. An arhat has the bliss of peace [zhi ba'i bde ba]. A pratyekabuddha and a bodhisattva have higher levels of bliss, but still their experience of bliss is impermanent [mi rtag pa]. Only the bliss of the Buddha is considered peerless, unmatched [bla na med pa]. There is no higher bliss than the bliss of the Buddha. This bliss is utterly unchanging [mchog tu mi 'gyur ba] and uncompounded ['dus ma byas pa].

The generosity of a bodhisattva differs greatly from ordinary generosity. Bodhisattvas are called great benefactors [sbyin bdag chen po] because they strive to fulfil every wish

of all sentient beings. They strive to free all beings from the confines of saṃsāra and to establish them on the level of perfect buddhahood. The bodhisattvas' motivation is bodhicitta [sems bskyed] and compassion [snying rje].

They manifest the transcendental perfection of generosity. Their generosity takes the form of giving material things [zang zing gi sbyin pa], giving the dharma [chos kyi sbyin pa], and giving protection from fear [mi 'jigs pa skyabs kyi sbyin pa].[1550]

Giving material things [zang zing gi sbyin pa] refers to three kinds of material giving: ordinary giving [gtong ba], great giving [gtong ba chen po], and exceptionally great giving [shin tu gtong ba].

Ordinary giving [gtong ba] means giving anything material, even if it is no more than a pinch of tea or a bowl of barley. If given with a perfectly pure intention, the amount is not important. The victors, who are skilled in means, are said to be able to help innumerable beings in the preta realms with a single drop of water or grain of barley by using the power of dhāraṇīs, mantras and other techniques.

Many practitioners make regular offerings of burned food. These white and red offerings of burned food [dkar bsur dmar bsur] bring great benefit to preta beings that move through space. Spirits that otherwise feed on the lives of others can temporarily be satisfied by the smell of the burned food offering, and their minds are liberated by the additional gift of dharma. That is done by reciting the following lines:

> Do not commit any negative actions;
> Practice perfect goodness and
> Tame your mind completely;
> This is the teaching of the Buddha.
>
> sdig pa ci yang mi bya zhing
> dge ba phun sum tshogs par spyod
> rang ri sems ni yongs su 'dul
> 'di ni sangs rgyas bstan pa yin

As a result of receiving these teachings, the pretas no longer harm others, and many beings are thus protected from the danger of death. This also constitutes giving protection from fear. In this way the practice of offering burned food includes all three kinds of generosity. Practitioners should try as well to be generous through such activities as making offerings to the three jewels and giving to beggars.

Great giving [gtong ba chen po] means to give others something rare or very precious to you personally, such as your own horse, your house, or even all your wealth.

Exceptionally great giving [shin tu gtong ba] is the giving of the bodhisattvas who dwell on one of the bodhisattva levels. They can give away their limbs, their body or their

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[1550] *Words of My Perfect Teacher*, pages 234-238.

very life, as in the previous life story of the Buddha when he gave his body to a starving tigress and her cubs.

Giving the dharma [chos kyi sbyin pa] is the cause that increases merit [bsod nams 'phel ba'i rgyu] and refers to leading others to spiritual practice by giving empowerments, explaining the dharma, transmitting texts and so forth. In order to teach the dharma to others, however, one must have reached a certain degree of experience and realization. Otherwise, one's efforts are a mere show and ego-gratification.

Atīśa's disciples asked him when they might be able to teach others, to work for others' benefit, or to perform the transference of consciousness for those who had just died. He replied as follows:

> You may guide others once you have realized emptiness and developed clairvoyance.
> You may work for their benefit once you no longer think of your own benefit.
> You may perform the transfer for the dead once you have entered the path of seeing.
>
> tshogs skyong ba'i dus stong nyi rtogs shing mngon shes skyes pa'i dus yin
> gzhan don byed pa'i dus rang don zad tsa na yin
> gshin po la 'pho ba 'debs pa'i dus mthong lam thob nas yin

It is useless for a beginner with neither experience nor realization to try to help others with the dharma. No blessing can be obtained, just as nothing can be poured from an empty vessel. Instructions given by a beginner will be insipid and without substance, like beer made without the grains having been pressed.

Someone who is at the aspiration stage [mos pa'i spyod pa gang zag], who has signs of progress but has not yet established firm stability, cannot work for the benefit of beings. Such a person's blessings are like something poured from one vessel into another; he can only fill others by emptying himself. His instructions are like a lamp passed from hand to hand [gdams ngag sgron me lag brgyud dang 'dra ste]; if he gives light to others, he is left in the dark.

Someone who has attained one of the bodhisattva levels, however, is ready to work for the benefit of others. The blessings of such a person are like the power of a magic vessel; he can bring all beings to maturity without ever running dry. His instructions are like a central lamp from which others can take light without it ever dimming.

This degenerate age is, therefore, not a time for ordinary beings to help others externally, but rather it is a time for them to live in solitude and train their own minds in the love and compassion of bodhicitta. It is a time to keep away from afflictions [nyon mongs].

Giving protection from fear [mi 'jigs pa skyabs kyi sbyin pa] means actually doing whatever you can to help others in difficulty. For instance, you can provide a refuge for those without any place of safety, give protection to those who lack a protector, and be with those who have no other companion. This refers particularly to such actions as saving beings from being killed or slaughtered, like saving the lives of dying fish, worms, flies and other creatures. It also refers to saving beings from going to the lower realms in their next lives by telling them about the benefits of virtue and the disadvantages of non-virtuous actions.

A bodhisattva is always willing to help others. As soon as someone knocks at a bodhisattva's door, three thoughts arise in his mind. 1) He understands the need to practice the dharma [chos sgrub dgos pa]. 2) He understands the need to think about the next life [skye ba phyi ma dran dgos pa]. And 3) he understands the need to meditate on impermanence ['chi ba mi rtag pa'i sgom dgos pa]. Through these three thoughts great joy rises in the bodhisattva's heart.

Text section 294 / stanza 34:

Someone who develops a negative attitude against a bodhisattva, a great benefactor of all beings, will take rebirth in hell for as many aeons as the duration of his negative attitude. The duration of a negative attitude is measured in ultimate split seconds [dus mtha'i skad cig ma]. One ultimate split second is the duration of one finger snap divided by sixty-four. The person will dwell in hell for as many aeons as the number of ultimate split seconds in the duration of the negative attitude. This only concerns a negative attitude toward a bodhisattva. That the consequences of physically or verbally abusing a bodhisattva are much more severe than merely bearing ill-will in one's mind against a bodhisattva is needless to mention.

Bodhisattvas are called potentially dangerous, perilous, sensitive or formidable objects [yul gnyan po] because of their great value to all sentient beings. Whoever harms a bodhisattva harms all sentient beings. To harbor anger against all sentient beings and to harbor anger against a single bodhisattva is almost equal in negative consequences. Killing the pilot of a jumbo jet is equal to killing all the passengers. Killing a mother bird causes all her chicks to die. The bodhisattva is in the same way considered to be the leader [ded dpon] of all beings, the mother of all beings, and the benefactor of all beings. Harming a bodhisattva is equal to harming all beings and, therefore, is a cause for taking direct rebirth in hell. Paltrül Rinpoche always emphasized training in pure perception [dag snang] and treating all beings with great respect since we do not know who is a bodhisattva and who is not. Since we have unknowingly accumulated considerable negative karma by bearing ill-will against other people who might be bodhisattvas, confession is imperative.

Whoever harms a bodhisattva is trying to destroy a mind imbued with the intention of freeing all sentient beings from suffering and establishing them on the level of complete enlightenment. Harming such a person is the attempt to destroy the happiness of infinite sentient beings, a severe negative action [sdig pa chen po] which inevitably leads to rebirth in the hell realms. Though the bodhisattva who is harmed

bears not even the slightest ill will against the person who inflicts harm upon him and instead showers him with love and compassion; nevertheless, that individual has accumulated tremendous negativity and will have to experience its karmic ripening.

When we perceive negative aspects within a person, we should carefully reflect about our perception on three levels:

1) Externally, a person might appear to be bad and might also be subject to negative reports from other people. Based on this information, all we can justifiably say is that we have a negative feeling about that person.

2) Internally, we cannot know for sure whether or not that person is actually bad. If we truthfully ask ourselves what we really know about him, we have to admit that we lack higher perception [mngon shes] and, therefore, cannot read the minds of others. We can never say for sure, "That person is not a bodhisattva." We can only guess what his true motivation might be.

3) Ultimately, even a being from a hell realm is in essence a primordially pure buddha [ngo bo ye dag gi sangs rgyas]. Regardless of what a person has done or does, he is still endowed with the buddha nature and deserves to be treated with respect and pure perception.

Harming others, knowing that they are endowed with bodhicitta, is a grave misdeed. Talking negatively about a bodhisattva due to jealousy [phrag dog] and aggression is a serious transgression. Knowing that a certain bodhisattva benefits beings greatly and yet slandering him anyway due to jealousy, or harming him out of ill-will [gnod sems], is the worst action one can commit. Knowingly harming a bodhisattva definitely causes tremendous negative karma. Unknowingly slandering a bodhisattva, being unaware that the person is a bodhisattva, is a less grave misdeed.

Vajrayāna practitioners in particular have the spiritual commitment [dam tshig] to train in infinite pure perception [dag pa rab 'byams], to see the entire universe and all beings as pure manifestations of the buddha nature. Negative talk, gossip, or focusing on the mistakes of others is completely opposed to pure perception [dag snang].

The moment you enter into established Buddhism [chos lugs] you must guard yourself against speaking badly about others and gossiping. A bodhisattva should only point out a mistake within another person directly or indirectly when he knows with certainty that the person will accept the criticism and will be helped by it. If a bodhisattva knows that criticism is not welcome, he must remain silent. If a bodhisattva can clearly see that a certain evildoer causes considerable harm to himself due to his negative behavior, then, motivated by great compassion, the bodhisattva may point out to that person his own shortcomings. But a bodhisattva would never talk badly about others only for the sake of conversation.

Text section 295:

The Praśānta-viniścaya-prātihārya-sūtra, according to the Peking Kangyur, Vol, 32, page 51,2,1 reads: "Mañjughoṣa! Be forewarned, since for as long as a bodhisattva

develops a mind full of anger or a mind full of contempt toward (another) bodhisattva, for that many aeons will that bodhisattva dwell with the beings of the hell realms."

'jam dpal byang chub sems dpa' byang chub sems dpa' la khong khro'i sems bskyed pa'am / brnyas pa'i sems bskyed pa ji tsam pa de snyed kyi bskal par byang chub sems dpa' des sems can dmyal ba rnams su gnas par go cha mgo bar bya'o.

The phrase *be forewarned* [go cha bgo ba] literally means 'to don the armor (of courage)' or 'to put on the harness (of courage)'. It connotes 'being certain' [thag chod pa], 'understanding clearly' [brtan brtan ha go ba], or 'preparing oneself' [gra sgrig byed a].

Since harboring a negative mindset toward a bodhisattva affects the happiness of all sentient beings, it creates boundless negative karma. This is the natural working of karma and not a punishment invented by Buddhist masters. Regardless of whether or not the bodhisattva is someone within the Buddhist hierarchy or someone living the life of an ordinary person, harboring ill-will toward a true bodhisattva harms all sentient beings. We cannot know who is a true bodhisattva and who is not. As Śāntideva's fellow monks did not recognize him to be a great bodhisattva, they were planning to expel him from the monastic community.

You should know the distinction between a 'Buddhist practitioner' [chos pa] and a 'follower of the Buddhist system' [chos lugs pa]. If you identify yourself with your spiritual community, your school and your philosophical system, you have already become a follower of organized religion [chos lugs pa]. Next, you feel easily obligated to take a stance and defend 'your school' against all 'other schools'. Without intending it, you have become involved in dharma politics. The 'Buddhist practitioner' [chos pa], on the other hand, simply strives to study and practice with his masters and stays away from group or dharma politics. He walks the path of truth. What he does and what he says accord with one another. He does not need to sweet-talk other people to achieve something, nor does he feel the need to put other people down. He practices the dharma and minds his own business.

A follower of a religious system, however, feels the need to join a group and to take up biased positions. He identifies with hierarchical structures and rules as well as with cultural or ethnic groups. He will try to advance within the group hierarchy for his personal benefit. He does not say what he really thinks. He will praise and slander wherever he sees it benefiting himself. There is not much of a difference between a member of a political or cultural party and a member of an institutionalized religion. All these systems are based on politics.

A beginner should from the very start train in pure perception, guarding himself against being drawn into negative views and gossip about other schools, systems, teachers, or practitioners. A beginner should understand that all beings are endowed with the buddha nature and are thus worthy of pure perception. Even if beings appear and act in a totally ordinary manner, in essence they are primordially pure buddhas [ngo bo ye dag gi sangs rgyas]. Consider all sentient beings to be future buddhas. If a beginner does not have the capacity to hold this view in his daily life, he should at least be honest with himself and think, "I don't know who is or who is not endowed

with the precious bodhicitta. Therefore, I had better treat all people as if they were bodhisattvas."

Know that for ordinary beings like ourselves it is impossible to know the minds of others. We have no way to know whether or not someone else is a true practitioner. Tibet was full of examples of hidden practitioners who attained the rainbow body at the moment of death. Not even close family members realized that they had a true practitioner among them.

You should also realize that if you perceive mistakes in another person, this is often fifty percent your own mistaken perception and fifty percent the other person's mistake. People always naturally tend to see the mistakes in others but really must search for their good qualities. A practitioner searches only for the good qualities in other persons. He ignores and never tries to disclose other people's faults. Know that since we ourselves lack good qualities, we have only a very limited capacity to see the qualities in others.

From the very beginning, clearly distinguish between the precious dharma [dam pa'i chos] and the person [gang zag] involved with dharma. Only a perfectly enlightened buddha truly represents the dharma. All other students, teachers, lamas and masters are still on the path toward enlightenment.

A practitioner should first aspire to overcome the most dangerous mistakes in his own mind such as aggression [zhe sdang], jealousy [phrag dog], pride [nga rgyal] and the like. Later he should learn how to deal with the more subtle mind poisons. Finally, he should overcome even positive fixations such as fixation on the Buddha. It is of utmost importance to follow this sequence. The two most dangerous mind poisons are aggression and jealousy. Aggression is the direct path to the hell realms. The most dangerous aspect of jealousy [phrag dog] is malevolence or ill will [gnod sems], the intention to destroy the happiness of others. If these two kinds of mind poisons are diminished, one's mind will be happy and content. Never try to destroy a virtuous thought or intent [dge ba'i sems] in another person's mind. Never try to take revenge [gnod lan], regardless of how much harm others have inflicted upon you. Revenge is nothing other than ill will. A practitioner must look into his own mind and see if these dangerous tendencies have diminished or not.

If one's mind is governed by aggression and ill will, and if one, even after many years of practice, has not overcome these great defects, one is not a practitioner, regardless of how much one meditates or studies. The dharma has not penetrated one's being. The nature of the buddha dharma is positive thinking [bsam pa bzang po]. The temporary purpose of the buddha dharma is to achieve a transformation of one's character. The ultimate purpose is the attainment of enlightenment. A practitioner is someone who harbors good intentions and thoughts [bsam pa bzang po yod pa po]. A beginning practitioner seeks to defeat his negative tendencies through positive thoughts. As it is said:

> The sign of true learning is a tamed and peaceful mind.

> The sign of true practice is having few afflictions.
>
> mkhas pa'i rtags ni zhi zhing 'dul ba
> sgom pa'i rtags ni nyon mong chung ba

Most people who lack merit [bsod nams med mkhan] will not have the fortune to meet the dharma at all. Unless one has made aspirations in former lifetimes, it is almost impossible to come into contact with the three jewels. Only persons endowed with merit [bsod nams can] will have the good fortune to meet the right teacher early on. Some students are not benefited even when meeting genuine Buddhist masters but rather seek connections with teachers of lesser quality. This is the student's personal karma and the power of his personal aspirations [smon lam]. One meets only the teacher with whom one has a karmic connection [las 'brel].

Text section 296 / stanza 35:

Whoever merely looks at a bodhisattva with a devoted attitude, with an attitude of admiration, and thinks, "This person is truly wonderful!" will gather incalculable merit. The positive consequences of generating devotion toward a bodhisattva are stronger than the negative consequences of generating a negative attitude against a bodhisattva. Even if one does horrible things to a bodhisattva, he will never retaliate and commit negative actions [sdig pa] himself. Whatever happens to a bodhisattva is transformed into an enhancement of virtue. The bodhisattva only manifests an ever increasing stream of goodness.

Text section 297:

Examples like those Khenpo Kunpal quoted from the Niyatāniyatā-mudrāvatāra-sūtra are called 'unlikely examples' [brtag pa mthar bzung gi dpe] or 'impossible examples' [yongs mi srid pa'i dpe].

A bodhisattva who is devoted to the great vehicle [theg pa chen po la mos pa'i byang chub sems dpa'] refers to a bodhisattva who is on the paths of accumulation and of application [tshogs lam dang sbyor lam la bsdad mkhan gyi byang chub sems dpa']. Such a bodhisattva is a beginning bodhisattva. It is of special importance to help and support beginning bodhisattvas, whose bodhicitta is not strongly developed. Harming a beginning bodhisattva is a grave misdeed. As we cannot distinguish between beginning and advanced bodhisattvas, we should practice pure perception toward all beings. Therefore, Buddha Śākyamuni said, "Except for me or those like me, beings should not fathom beings" [nga dang nga 'dra ba ma gtogs gang zag gi tshod gang zag gis bzung ba mi bya'o].

This means that only the Buddha and tenth level bodhisattvas can truly distinguish the level of realization of other sentient beings. Only if we truly follow the conduct of a bodhisattva, do we avoid generating the negative karma of harming other bodhisattvas. Since knowing who is or who is not a bodhisattva is largely impossible,

we cannot rely on our own judgement, and our only recourse is to practice pure perception [dag snang].

Text section 298:

Bodhisattvas are beings *who turn bad omens into auspicious conditions* [ltas ngan g.yang du 'gug], *who allow bad conditions to arise as enhancements* [rkyen ngan grogs su 'char ba' gang zag]. Bad omens [ltas ngan pa] connote bad signs [rtags ngan pa], something inauspicious [bkra ma shis pa], and even obstacles [bar chad]. For ordinary beings all these situations and circumstances are something that must be avoided [phar 'dor bya yin pa] and not something that must be accepted or welcomed [dang du len bya ma yin pa]. Such beings seek out methods to overcome [spong thabs] these difficult events.

When a bodhisattva yogin encounters bad omens and inauspicious events, he feels so confident and fearless that he invites them. He uses these obstacles to test his dharma practice. He perceives bad omens as auspicious circumstances [g.yang du len pa], as aids [grogs su len pa]. Instead of rejecting them he will joyously invite them. The yogin bodhisattva has the strength to transform obstacles into enhancements for his practice due to his bodhicitta. When the yogin dwells within bodhicitta without wavering [byang chub sems las mi g.yo ba bsdad], no circumstances can harm his practice. Everything he encounters becomes an enhancement.

Even if suffering from a mortal sickness, he takes this as an enhancement for his practice, joyously thinking, "May the suffering and sicknesses of all sentient beings ripen on my body. May all sentient beings be established on the level of ultimate happiness." In this way he views any situation with the 'eye of bodhicitta' [byan chub sems kyi mig]. He dwells within bodhicitta unmoving like a mountain.

Text section 299:

Whatever adversities bodhisattvas may experience, however badly people might treat them, their dharma practice will not be impeded. They perceive negative conditions as *something that purifies (their former) negative deeds* [sdig pa'i bshags ma], as *something that brings forth virtue* [dge ba'i bskul ma]. Initially, everything they experience supports them, encouraging them toward virtue [dang po dge ba bskul ba'i grogs byed pa]. Next, adversities provide the condition for letting virtue increase [bar du dge ba'phel ba'i rkyen byed pa], eventually creating the causes for the bodhisattvas to attain complete and perfect enlightenment [tha mar mngon par rdzogs pa'i sangs rgyas kyi rgyu byed pa].

Many bodhisattvas attained enlightenment based on bad friends and difficult circumstances. The famous nun Palmo [dge slong ma dpal mo] suffered from leprosy. She practiced the sadhāna of Avalokiteśvara, was cured of her disease and, in her very body, went to the celestial buddha fields [lus ma spong bar mkha' spyod]. Milarepa reached enlightenment due to the kindness of his enemies. A practitioner must know the key point of how to transform negative conditions into enhancements [rkyen ngan grogs su 'gyur] for practice. Only then will dharma practice flourish.

As serious as a practitioner's difficult experiences may be, he should understand them as something that purifies his former negative deeds. People who slander him become the true object of his pity and compassion, since he knows they are accumulating bad karma. At the same time, he also knows that he is experiencing the slander due to his own bad karma. If a practitioner had no bad karma left at all, no one would ever speak negatively about him. All the gossip, slander, evil talk, jealousy and so forth are simply a sure indication that one's own bad karma is ripening. It is virtually impossible to say anything negative about the Buddha. One might not agree with his view, but to find a fault within the Buddha is difficult even for negatively-minded people. There are neither karmic causes [rgyu] nor karmic conditions [rkyen] remaining within the Buddha.

If true bodhisattvas are slandered, their fame becomes greater. If you beat and abuse a true bodhisattva, his charisma will shine forth to an even greater extent. All negative conditions are for him an enhancement [bog 'don] and remove obstacles [gegs bsal].

Tulku Urgyen instructed that every practitioner should apply the sūtra teaching on training in goodness in four ways [dge sbyong chos bzhi]:

> Although accused, do not respond with accusation.
> Although attacked, do not respond with aggression.
> Although beaten, do not strike back.
> Although exposed, do not respond by exposing others.
>
> gshe yang slar mi gshe ba dang
> khros kyang slar mi khro ba
> brdegs kyang slar mi rdeg pa
> mtshang brus kyang slar mi 'bru ba'o

Tulku Urgyen commented that you might be falsely blamed for something terrible. You might be accused of something bad you did not do or say. A yogin does not respond to accusation by saying, "I didn't do it." He does not retaliate by accusing others. When anger or aggression comes at him, he never answers with aggression. However harsh the words may be, however bold the aggressor, the yogin does not get upset. Even if attacked physically and beaten, he never hits back; he sits still, taking the beating silently. As long as the yogin is on the path, he is not free from defects. So, when someone exposes his faults, he does not become upset or defensive. He might say, "What you observe is true. I am at fault."

If you apply these points, you will have no enemies; you will not be a target for aggression. Whatever bad things might be said or done to you, they will cause no harm. As you do not respond to negativity, people will tire of picking fights with you. Train yourself and try to accomplish this much patience. If you stick to these points, you may be called a practitioner. Give the gain to others and keep the loss for yourself. Allow others to be right, even if it makes you wrong.

Behavior should always accord with the teachings. Do not be disturbed; harmonize with every situation. Do not waste time in pointless endeavors, such as socializing and watching movies. Do not spend time in idle talk and gossip. Do not be careless in your actions. Keep the precepts and vows you have taken. Persist in gathering the accumulations of merit and wisdom. Always generate devotion to your root guru. Be courageous in the view [lta ba la dpa' dgos]; be humble in your conduct [spyod pa la sdar dgos]. Do as Tilopa advised Naropa:

> Child, perception arises interdependently.
> Naropa, until you realize the unborn essence
> Never leave the vehicle
> Of the two accumulations.
>
> bu snang ba rten cing 'brel 'byung 'di
> don skye ba med par ma rtogs par
> tshogs gnyis shing rta'i 'phang lo dang
> 'bral bar ma byed na ro pa

This is how Tulku Urgyen taught on training in goodness in four ways.

Text section 300:

Those practitioners who are meek in courage and unskilled in the techniques of the bodhisattvas are easily overwhelmed the moment a few minor inconvenient circumstances arise. In order to become courageous, a practitioner must train his mind [sems sbyong] through meditation on bodhicitta. A bodhisattva should alternate between times of retreat and seclusion on the one hand and times of engagement with ordinary beings on the other. After a period of time in retreat he should check whether he can maintain his bodhicitta in the face of negative-minded people. You should train in all methods of dispelling obstacles and applying enhancements [bgegs sel 'bog 'don gyi tshul]. A meek bodhisattva [byang sems snying stobs zhan pa] is someone who has not applied the methods of mind-training [sems sbyong thabs ma gso mkhan] and who lacks endeavor [brtson 'grus med mkhan]. Those 'unskilled in methods' [thabs la mi mkhas pa] refers to those who lack knowledge [shes rab med mkhan]. Such practitioners are easily overwhelmed by minor inconvenient circumstances.

When they are well fed and warmed by the sun they look like real practitioners, but they cannot handle any difficult situation without losing their composure. They look like real practitioners, like models for (real) practitioners [chos pa'i gzugs brnyan / nyams len pa'i gzugs brnyan], but in fact they are just feeble imitations, poor copies of a real practitioner. As it is said:

> Well fed and warmed by the sun, he is a role model for practitioners.
> When meeting difficult circumstances, he is an ordinary being.

Text section 301:

Such feeble copies of practitioners are like candles in the wind. Wind can be either an aid [grogs] or a hindrance [dgra] for fire. When the wind rises, a small candle is blown out. In that case the wind has become a hindrance to the fire. Even when a strong wind blows, is does not harm a forest fire but enhances it. In the same way, a feeble practitioner falls apart in the face of obstacles, while a true practitioner is stable in his bodhicitta practice and transforms every situation into an aid on the path to enlightenment. In adversities his realization is greatly enhanced. He is like a forest fire that is supported by the wind. The stronger the wind blows, the stronger does the fire blaze.

The signs of a good dharma practitioner are devotion [dad pa], compassion [snying rje], renunciation [nges 'byung], wisdom-knowledge [shes rab], certainty [nges shes], radiant confidence [spobs pa], a happy frame of mind [sems bde ba], a peaceful frame of mind [sems zhi ba], inner courage [khungs dpa' ba] and fearlessness ['jigs skrag med pa]. He practices the ten virtuous actions to the best of his ability and avoids the ten non-virtuous actions as much as he is able. He embraces all his actions with bodhicitta. The abovementioned qualities all stem from a mind well trained in bodhicitta. These are some guidelines for a practitioner.

There are two kinds of circumstances, positive circumstances [rkyen bzang po] and negative ones [rkyen ngan pa]. A practitioner must train in bodhicitta so that he no longer becomes afraid and weak in the face of negative circumstances. Negative circumstances are easy to recognize. One should understand that positive circumstances can become a great obstacle for a practitioner. When a yogin becomes famous, gathers many students and receives great donations and offerings, he must by all means remain humble [khengs ba med pa] and free from attachment [zhen pa med pa]. He must constantly meditate on the 'four ends of impermanence' [mi rtag pa'i mtha' bzhi]:

> The end of birth is death.
> The end of gathering is dispersal.
> The end of riches is loss.
> The end of high positions is to fall.
>
> skyes pa'i mtha' 'chi ba
> 'dus pa'i mtha' 'bral ba
> 'byor ba'i mtha' rgud pa
> mtho ba'i mtha' ltung ba

When people treat a bodhisattva respectfully, he must respond with humility [nymas chung]. When others treat him badly, he must generate internal courage [spobs pa] and never lose his composure.

Text sections 302-306 / stanza 36:

Here, Śāntideva offers respect and homage to all those who have developed the precious bodhicitta in their minds. Bodhicitta is the cause that brings happiness to all beings, the cause that frees all beings from suffering.

A buddha is born from a bodhisattva. After three incalculable aeons as a bodhisattva, Śākyamuni finally attained buddhahood. A bodhisattva is born from compassion. Therefore, you should first offer homage and respect to compassion [snying rje]. Candrakīrti [zla ba grags pa] and Śāntideva said that when you pay respect to a bodhisattva, you pay respect to bodhicitta. You are honoring the compassion of that bodhisattva.

Whoever harms a bodhisattva will eventually be freed from saṃsāra, although he must temporarily take rebirth in hell. This refers to the saying: *"In case of a good connection you will reach buddhahood in one lifetime, and in case of a bad connection you will eventually reach the end of saṃsāra* [bzang 'brel tshe gcig sangs rgyas / ngan 'brel 'khor ba mtha' can]."

An example for a bad connection [ngan 'brel] with the Buddha is the monk Sunakṣatra [dge slong legs pa'i skar ma], who served the Buddha for twenty-five years and knew the entire tripiṭaka by heart. He thought he was equal to the Buddha and could not see any superior quality in the Buddha. The consequences of that negative attitude toward the Buddha are said to be 500 rebirths as a preta and final rebirth in the Avīcī hell [dmyal ba rdo rje'i gdan]. It is further predicted that Sunakṣatra will be liberated at the time of 'Buddha Rocana' [sangs rgyas smos pa / smos pa snang mdzad], the last buddha of this 'Fortunate Aeon'. This illustrates the case of someone with a bad connection to a bodhisattva or a buddha. Despite his bad connection, he will eventually be liberated from saṃsāra.

Those who have no connection to the dharma at all but who only harm beings will stay in saṃsāra endlessly. Anyone who has a connection to the dharma, however, will eventually reach enlightenment because the root of liberation [thar pa'i sa bon] has been implanted in their minds. It is predicted that at the end of this Fortunate Aeon in which one thousand buddhas will appear, at the time of 'Buddha Rocana' all beings with a connection to the dharma will take rebirth in Sukhāvatī, the buddha field of Amitābha.

People who have broken their Vajrayāna samāyas (spiritual pledges) with their root gurus must endure rebirth in the hell realms for a long time, but this does come to an end. That is called *reaching the end of saṃsāra* ['khor ba mtha' can]. Root gurus cannot liberate their bad students from the consequences of their broken samāyas. Even the Buddha himself cannot save beings from their karma. The buddhas, bodhisattvas and teachers are only the external conditions enabling sentient beings to develop their internal qualities and to purify their own obscurations. In the case of bad students, since the teacher has implanted the seed for liberation in their minds, even though they must take temporary rebirth in the hell realms, their saṃsāra will come to an end, and they will eventually reach enlightenment.

You might ask, "Who is better off? Someone with absolutely no contact with the dharma, who commits negative deeds, or someone who practices under a qualified master and breaks all the precepts, commitments and samāyas?" The answer is, "The one who breaks all his samāyas will take rebirth in the hell realms but will eventually attain enlightenment due to the blessings and aspirations of the buddhas, bodhisattvas and his root guru. People who have committed negative deeds on the other hand have no chance to meet the dharma because the seed for liberation was never implanted in their minds. For the bad student saṃsāra will eventually come to an end; for the bad person without any connection to the dharma, there is no end to saṃsāra."

What the Buddha has said about this must be understood in the context of infinite time [dus mtha' med pa]. The Buddha clearly perceives the infinity of time and can see the law of cause and effect directly. Ordinary beings only consider how to make it through the day, the week, a month, a year, or this life. Their view of time is extremely limited compared to the Buddha's wisdom perception. From the perspective of infinite time, it is always better to have some connection with a bodhisattva, be it a good or a bad one. Seen from a limited perspective of time, a bad connection with a bodhisattva looks very frightening.

In text section 302, Khenpo Kunpal refers to the story of the sage Kṣāntivādin [drang srong bzod par smra ba], whose enemies tested his patience by slowly mutilating his body. This story illustrates that any kind of mistreatment can become a cause for increasing the virtue of a bodhisattva.[1551]

The poor and miserable are the cause for the bodhisattva's practice of generosity. A negative person is the cause for the bodhisattva's practice of patience. Those in great distress and suffering are the objects of the bodhisattva's practice of compassion. Everything a bodhisattva encounters enhances the power of his practice [rtsal rdzogs]. Everything serves to remove obstacles [bgegs bsal] and enhances [bog 'don] practice. In this way, bodhisattvas can perfect their skills only by facing the world.

For example, if an evil being physically harms a bodhisattva, that being will definitely take rebirth in the lower realms and experience the ripening of his negative karma. However, as the bodhisattva himself harbors no ill will but instead includes the evil person in his aspiration prayers, the evil person will eventually embark on the path to enlightenment due to the power of the bodhisattva's aspiration.

Having understood the special qualities of the buddhas and the bodhisattvas, one should actually begin to practice taking refuge, developing bodhicitta, offering confession and so forth. Mere theoretical knowledge does not help to reach enlightenment.

[1551] *gtam rgyud*, page 38, the story of the 'Sage called Proclaimer of Patience', [drang srong bzod pa can gyi gtam rgyud]; and page 41 / 397, the story of the 'King called Power of Kindness' [rgyal po byams pa'i stobs kyi gtam rgyud]. See also *mdzangs blun*, story 11, pages 70-75, and story 12, pages 76-78.

Text section 307:

Most people in Tibet have an affinity toward Mahāyāna. They aspire to reach enlightenment; they aspire to become buddhas. In addition, at the time of Khenpo Kunpal, most Tibetans had received empowerments and thus had taken the refuge and bodhisattva precepts. Anyone who has developed bodhicitta has become an object of respect and worthy of offerings from all beings and gods. Such people will eventually become buddhas in the future. Therefore, Khenpo Kunpal says one should treat all people with respect, confess the slander and disrespect one previously committed, and promise to abstain from similar negativities in the future. Everyone should be treated with pure perception and as an object of refuge.

In the sūtra context, training in pure perception [dag snang] means thinking that all sentient beings are bodhisattvas and, therefore, treating them with respect and kindness. As it is said:

> Whenever I detect flaws in others
> May I look at my own mistakes.
> May I recognize my own mistakes and
> Practice pure perception.
>
> gzhan gyi skyon la mthong ba'i tshe
> rang gi skyon la mthong bar shog
> rang skyon rang gis mthong ba dang
> dag pa'i snang ba sgyur bar shog

If you perceive flaws and mistakes in someone, check carefully where your own negative thought and judgement about that person are coming from. A pure mind cannot see flaws in others. A buddha would never judge any being to be evil. A buddha will perceive beings as being caught up in their own bad dreams. He perceives the beings as well as their negative dreams, and he perceives them both as non-existing illusions. At the same time, he continues to perceive beings themselves as pure.

The perception [mthong snang] of a buddha and the knowledge [ha go ba] of a buddha do differ. Although a buddha has no impure perception, he recognizes beings' impure perceptions. While knowing all perceptions of others, he himself is free from all impure perception [gzhan ngo'i snang ba thams cad mkhyen na yang rang ngo la ma dag pa'i snang ba med]. Thus, the purity of one's perception depends on the purity of one's own mind. A pure mind has pure perception. For example, it is said that pretas perceive water as consisting of pus and blood, gods perceive water as nectar, while human beings perceive water as water. Our impure perceptions of the world are a magical display of our ignorance [ma rig pa'i cho 'phrul]. Based on this ignorance, various reactions such as likes and dislikes manifest. We are like people with an eye disease that causes them to perceive a white conch to be yellow. We should not try to change

the conch but rather find the cure for the affliction. The cure is to train our minds in bodhicitta and pure perception. The basis for pure perception is the fact that all beings actually are primordially pure [ye nas dag pa], primordially buddhas [nas nas sangs rgyas].

Text section 308:

In these degenerate times, however, even bodhisattvas accumulate misdeeds easily because of thinking badly about others. It is easy to think, "That person is really bad," thus accumulating a misdeed [nyes pa]. It is better to practice pure perception and ignore the defects of others. We should be like the Indian Brahmins who consider the moon to be a god. They do not worship the full moon but only the moon on the third day [tshes pa gsum], the day when it begins to wax. These Brahmins consider the third day as the day of the moon god's birth. By prostrating to the moon of the third day they acknowledge the preciousness of the moon god's birthday.

Just as a crown prince is honored because he will become king, by honoring a bodhisattva we honor someone who will eventually become a buddha. The bodhisattva's practice of bodhicitta is the cause [rgyu] for his becoming a buddha. A bodhisattva is a buddha in the making. Beginning bodhisattvas are like baby buddhas. Just as one nurtures children with kindness, one should support bodhisattvas, as they are on their way to becoming buddhas. Honoring a bodhisattva is like honoring a prince, an heir to the throne. Eventually, the prince will take hold of the kingdom. Even Buddha Śākyamuni honors and prostrates to bodhicitta because bodhicitta is the teacher of all the buddhas. In this manner even a fully enlightened buddha like Buddha Śākyamuni always honors his teacher.

Text section 309:

Though one might perceive a flaw in a bodhisattva, a flaw is just something compounded ['dus byas], something that will eventually cease to exist due to the power of the bodhisattva's meditation. Bodhisattvas are not perfect at the beginning. Only the Buddha is utterly perfect. Therefore, the most important advice concerning pure perception is not to dwell on other peoples' mistakes.

Bodhicitta is like a wish-fulfilling jewel. In the case of a beginning bodhisattva, this jewel is still covered with dirt. Nobody would ever consider a dirt-encrusted, wish-fulfilling jewel as something bad, but it does need cleaning. While the beginning bodhisattva proceeds on the way to enlightenment, his obscurations and defilements will gradually be cleared away, and all the inherent qualities of the buddha nature will become manifest.

The aim of every bodhisattva is to attain enlightenment as quickly as possible [gang 'khyogs 'khyogs]. The more a bodhisattva progresses along the five paths and the ten levels, the more will he be able to help sentient beings. The transcendental perfection of diligence means to strive for complete enlightenment with all of one's capacity.

The Buddha is endowed with the most powerful capability to help others. He can benefit countless beings in infinite world systems. His sphere of influence includes all the buddha fields of the three kayas. Bodhisattvas cannot benefit beings to take rebirth in the dharmakāya buddha field nor in the saṃbhogakāya buddha fields. They are able to establish beings only in nirmāṇakāya buddha fields.

The nirvāṇa of a perfectly enlightened buddha does not end his activities for sentient beings. However, when an arhat enters into nirvāṇa, he cannot continue to help beings since arhats do not make extensive aspirations to liberate sentient beings. Mainly concerned with their own liberation, they fail to create the auspicious connection [rten 'brel] to help others.

When an arhat enters into nirvāṇa, he abides in the peaceful and happy state of wisdom [zhi bde'i ye shes]. He might remain in this state for ten aeons, or even a hundred aeons, until his merit is finished and he is awakened by light beams emitted from the Buddha. In the arhat's own perception the duration of one hundred aeons does not seem to be long, since the arhat has no sense of time in this state. A bodhisattva would never aim for his own personal liberation, the limited enlightenment of an arhat.

The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra teaches the perfect way of the bodhisattva. Read this text and its commentary over and over again. Each time you will reach a new level of understanding. The Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra is a textbook [gzhung] as well as an instruction manual [man ngag]. This book is a commentary on the intent [dgongs 'grel] of all of the Buddha's immaculate teachings [bka' dri ma med pa]. It requires intense study mingled with practice. The teachings of this book must be applied to your mind. Even if the words of the text are easy to read, bringing the meaning of the text into one's mind and keeping it there is not at all easy.

Theoretical understanding of the Bodhisattva-caryāvatāra will not change your character. Only if you devote yourself to its practice will realization eventually dawn in your mind. You must study the text and contemplate its meaning. You must practice its methods for gathering the accumulation of merit. You must implement the practice of the six transcendental perfections in your daily life. As the main point, you need to realize the wisdom of egolessness, to recognize your own buddha nature. This realization is utterly dependent on gathering the accumulations, purifying the obscurations, and receiving the blessing of your root guru. As it is said:

> As far as the ultimate, the co-emergent wisdom, is concerned,
> Know that it is foolish to rely upon methods other than
> Practices for gathering the accumulations and purifying obscurations
> As well as the blessing of the glorious root guru.

> don dam lhan cig skyes pa'i ye shes ni
> tshogs bsags sgrib pa dag pa'i lag rjes dang
> dpal ldan bla ma'i byin rlabs kho na las

thabs gzhan brten pa rmongs par shes par bya

Mind [sems] is primordially endowed with wisdom [ye shes]. Mind and wisdom are co-emergent or co-existent [lhan skyes]. They cannot be separated. They exist at the same time [dus mnyam du yod pa], without former [snga ma] or latter [phyi ma]. Buddhahood is only attained if the co-emergent wisdom is realized.

Seen from the ultimate level, ignorance [ma rig pa] has no root [rtsa bral] and no basis [gzhi med]. To allow this non-existent ignorance to be cleared away and to let co-emergent wisdom manifest [mngon du 'gyur], we must gather the accumulations [tshgos bsags] of merit and wisdom, purify the two obscurations [sgrib dag], afflictive and cognitive, and receive the blessings of the guru.

If you rely on other methods to realize co-emergent wisdom, you are foolish. Once the obscurations are purified, realization will dawn naturally [sgrib pa dag na rtogs pa ngang gis 'char]. The blessing of the master only descends through the student's faith. Faith is the very root of blessing. Faith and devotion are the essence of guru yoga.

Text section 310:

The conduct of the bodhisattvas refers to the six transcendental perfections [pha rol phyin pa drug], the four means of attraction [bsdus ba'i dngos po bzhi], the three trainings [bslab pa gsum] and so forth.

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skyong], **Peking No. 5281, Vol. 100**, pages 235.2.5-235.5.7, folio 227b3-229a7, mDo 'grel (dbu ma) XXVII, Sha. In bibliography of Tibetan works cited under *spyod 'jug don bsdus pa*.

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Daśabhumika-sūtra [sa bcu pa'i mdo]: Section 31 of the Avataṃsaka-sūtra, **Peking No. 761, Vol. 25.**

Dharma-dharmatā-vibhaṇga-kārikā [chos dang chos nyid rnam par 'byed pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa], taught by Maitreyanātha [byams pa mgon po] and recorded by Asaṅga [thogs med], **Peking No. 5524, Vol. 108**.

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Guhyagarbha-tantra [rgyud gsang snying]: Guhyagarbha-tattvaviniścaya-mahā-tantra [rgyud gsang ba snying po], rnying ma rgyud 'bum, Vol. 14.

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Kalpalatā [dpag bsam 'khri shing]: Bodhisattvāvadāna-kalpalatā [byang chub sems dpa'i rtogs pa brjod pa'i dpag bsam gyi 'khri shing], written by Kṣemendra [dge ba'i dbang po], **Peking No. 5655, Vol. 128-129**, mDo 'grel (skyes rabs) XCIII, Ge.

Karuṇā-puṇḍarīka [snying rje pad dkar]: Ārya-karuṇā-puṇḍarīka-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra ['phags pa snying rje pad ma dkar po zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo], **Peking No. 780, Vol. 29**, pages 191.5.5-267.1.8, folio 149a5-337a8, mDo sna tshogs VI, Cu.

Lalita-vistara-sūtra [rgya cher rol pa'i mdo]: Ārya-lalita-vistara-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra ['phags pa rgya cher rol pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mod], **Peking No. 763, Vol. 27**, pages 153.1.1-252.4.5, folio 1-246a5, mDo sna tshogs II, Ku.

Laṇkāvatāra-sūtra [lang kar gshegs pa'i mdo]: Ārya-laṇkāvatāra-mahāyāna-sūtra ['phags pa lang kar gshegs pa'i theg pa chen po'i mdo], **Peking No. 775, Vol. 29**, pages 26.3.7-85.4.2, folio 60b7-208b2, mDo sna tshogs V, Ngu.

Madhyamakāvatāra-nāma [dbu ma la 'jug pa zhes bya ba], written by Candrakīrti [zla ba grags pa], **Peking No. 5262, Vol. 98**.

Madhyānta-vibhaṇga (kārikā) [dbus dang mtha' rnam par 'byed pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa], taught by Maitreyanātha [byams pa mgon po] and recorded by Asaṅga [thogs med], **Peking No. 5522, Vol. 108**.

Mahā-karuṇā-puṇḍarīka [snying rje chen po'i pad ma dkar po]: Ārya-mahā-karuṇā-puṇḍarīka-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra ['phags pa snying rje chen po'i pad ma dkar po zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo], **Peking No. 779, Vol. 29**, pages 157.3.1-191.5.5, folio 63a1-149a5, mDo sna tshogs VI, Cu.

Mahā-parinirvāṇa-sūtra [mya 'das chen po'i mdo]: Ārya-mahā-parinirvāṇa-sūtra ['phags pa yongs su mya ngan las 'das pa chen po'i mdo], **Peking No. 787-789, Vols. 30-31**, mDo sna tshogs XIII-X, Ju-Tu.

Mahā-prātihārya-nirdeśa-sūtra [cho 'phrul chen po bstan pa'i mdo]: Ārya-mahā-prātihārya-nirdeśa-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra ['phags pa cho 'phrul chen po bstan pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo], Ratna-kūṭa, **Peking No. 760**, sūtra 22, **Vol. 24**, pages 11.1.4-25.4.5, folio 22a4-58b5, dKon brtsegs V, Zi.

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Niyata-aniyatā-mudrāvatāra-sūtra: Ārya-niyata-aniyata-gati-mudrāvatāra-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra ['phags pa nges pa dang ma nges par 'gro ba'i phyag rgya la 'jug pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo], **Peking No. 868, Vol. 34**, pages 280.4.7-286.4.8, folio 66a7-81b1, mDo sna tshogs XVIII, Tsu.

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Prajñā-daṇḍa [shes rab sdong bu]: Nīti-śāstra-prajñā-daṇḍa-nāma [lugs kyi bstan bcos shes rab sdong bu zhes bya ba], written by Nāgārjuna [klu sgrub], **Peking No. 5821, Vol. 144**, pages 2.5.4-7.3.7, folio 145a4-156b7, mDo 'grel (thun mong lugs) CXXIII, Go.

Prajñā-mūla [rtsa ba shes rab]: Prajñā-nāma-mūla-madhyamaka-kārikā [dbu ma rtsa ba'i tshig le'ur byas pa shes rab ces bya ba], written by Nāgārjuna [klu sgrub], **Peking No. 5224, Vol. 95**.

Prajñāpāramitā-sañcaya-gāthā [mdo sdud pa]: Ārya-prajñāpāramitā-sañcaya-gāthā ['phags pa shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa sdud pa tshigs su bcad pa], **Peking No. 735, Vol. 21**, also refered to as *sher phyin sdud pa*.

Prajñā-pariccheda-pañjikā [shes rab le'u'i bka' 'grel], no author mentioned, **Peking No. 5278, Vol. 100**, pages 218.5.7-228.2.5, folio 186b7-210a5, mDo 'grel (dbu ma) XXVII, Sha.

Pramāṇa-sammuccaya [tshad ma kun btus] written by Dignāga [phyogs kyi glang po], **Peking No. 5700, Vol. 130**, pages 1.1.1-7-3-6, folio 1-13a, mDo 'grel (tshad ma) XCV, Ce.

Pramāṇa-vārttika-kārikā [tshad ma rnam 'grel] written by Dharmakīrti [chos kyi grags pa], **Peking No. 5709, Vol. 130**, pages 78.2.4-102.2.6, folio 190a4-250b6, mDo 'grel (tshad ma) XCV, Ce.

Pramāṇa-vimiścaya [tshad ma rnam nges] written by Dharmakīrti [chos kyi grags pa], **Peking No. 5710, Vol. 130**, pages 102.3.6-133, folio 250b6-329a7, mDo 'grel (tshad ma) XCV, Ce.

Pañcaviṃśatisāhasrika-prajñāpāramitā [shes rab kyi pha rol tu phyin pa stong phrag nyi shu lnga pa], **Peking No. 731, Vol. 18**, also refered to as *yum bar ma* or *yum 'bring ba.*

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Prātimakṣa-sūtra [so sor thar pa'i mdo], **Peking No. 1031, Vol. 42**, pages 141.1.1-149.4.1, folio 1-18b1, 'Dul ba V, Che.

Rāja-deśa-sūtra (1) [rgyal po la gdams pa'i mdo]: Rāja-deśa-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra [rgyal po la gdams pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo], **Peking No. 880, Vol 35**, pages 1.1.1-2.3.2, folio 215a1-218b2, mDo sna tshogs XVIII, Tsu.

Rāja-deśa-sūtra (2) [rgyal po la gdams pa'i mdo]: Rāja-deśa-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra [rgyal po la gdams pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo], **Peking No. 881, Vol 35**, pages 2.3.3-3.1.4, folio 218b3-220a4, mDo sna tshogsXVIII, Tsu.

Rāja-parikathā-ratnāvali [rgyal po la gtam bya ba rin po che'i phreng ba], written by Nāgārjuna, **Peking No. 5658, Vol 129.**

Rājāvavādaka-sūtra [rgyal po la gdams pa'i mdo]: Ārya-rājāvavādaka-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra ['phags pa rgyal po la gdams pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo], **Peking No. 887, Vol. 35**, pages 78.5.4-81.4.5, folio 81b4-88b5, mDo sna tshogs XIX, Tshu.

Ratna-cūḍa-paripṛcchā-sūtra [gtsug na rin po ches zhus pa'i mdo]: Ārya-ratna-cūḍa-paripṛcchā-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra ['phags pa gtsug na rin po ches zhus pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo], Ratna-kūṭa, **Peking No. 760**, sūtra 47, **Vol. 24**, pages 229.6.1-251.1.8, folio 204a1-257a8, dKon brtsegs VI, 'I.

Ratna-kūṭa [dkon mchog brtegs pa]: Ārya-mahā-ratna-kūṭa-dharma-paryāya-śata-sāhasrika-grantha ['phags pa dkon mchog brtsegs pa chen po'i chos kyi rnam grangs

le'u stong phrag brgya pa], **Peking No. 760, Vols. 22-24**, bKon brtsegs I-VI, sūtra 1-49.

Ratna-megha-sūtra [dkon mchog sprin]: Ārya-ratna-megha-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra ['phags pa dkon mchog sprin zhes bya ba theg pa chen pa'i mdo], **Peking No. 897, Vol. 35**, pages 171.1.1-220.4.3, folio 1-121a3, mDo sna tshogs XX, Dzu.

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Sāgarmati-paripṛcchā-sūtra [blo gros rgya mtshos zhus pa'i mdo]: Ārya-sāgarmati-paripṛcchā-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra ['phags pa blo gros rgya mtshos zhus pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo], **Peking No. 819, Vol. 33**, pages 43.1.1-93.5.5, folio 1-124a5, mDo sna tshogs XIII, Nu.

Samādhi-rāja-sūtra [ting nge 'dzin gyi rgyal po'i mdo]: Ārya-sarva-dharma-svabhāva-samatā-vipañcita-samādhi-rāja-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra ['phags pa chos thams cad kyi rang bzhin mnyam pa nyid rnam par spros pa ting nge 'dzin gyi rgyal po zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo], **Peking No. 795. Vols. 31-32**, mDo sna tshogs XI, Thu.

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Śikṣā-samuccaya [bslab btus / bslab pa kun las btus pa], written by Śāntideva [zhi ba'i lha], **Peking No. 5336, Vol. 102**, pages 183.1.1-272.3.3, folio 3a8-225b3, mDo 'grel (dbu ma) XXXI, Ki.

Subāhu-paripṛcchā-sūtra [lag bzang zhus pa'i mdo]: Ārya-subāhu-paripṛcchā-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra ['phags pa lag bzangs kyis zhus pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po'i mdo], Ratna-kūṭa, **Peking No. 760**, sūtra 26, **Vol. 24**, pages 63.4.5-76.1.3, folio 153b5-184b3, dKon brtsegs V, Zi.

Subāhu-paripṛcchā-tantra [dpung bzang zhus pa'i rgyud]: Ārya-subāhu-paripṛcchā-nāma-tantra ['phags pa dpung bzang gis zhus pa zhes bya ba'i rgyud], **Peking No. 428, Vol. 9**, pages 33.5.6-42.5.4, folio 179b6-202a4, rGyud XIX, Tsha.

Suhṛl-lekha [spring yig], written by Nāgārjuna [klu sgrub], **Peking No. 5409, Vol. 103**, pages 213.5.6.-216.5.4, folio 74b6-81b4, mDo 'grel (dbu ma) XXXII, Khi.

Śūnyatāsaptati-kārikā-nāma [stong pa nyid bdun cu pa'i tshig le'ur byas pa zhes bya ba], written by Nāgārjuna, **Peking No. 5227, Vol. 95.**

Sūtra-samuccaya [mdo btus / mdo kun las btus pa], written by Nāgārjuna, **Peking No. 5330, Vol. 102**, pages 81.2.2-113.3.4, folio 172b2-253a5, mDo 'grel (dbu ma) XXX, A.

Sūtrālaṃkāra [mdo sde rgyan]: Mahāyāna-Sūtrālaṃkāra-kārikā [theg pa chen po mdo sde'i rgyan tshig le'ur byas pa], taught by Maitreyanātha and written by Asaṅga [thogs

med], **Peking 5521, Vol. 108**, pages 1.1.1-19.4.3, folio 1-43b3, mDo ’grel (sems tsam) XLIV, Phi.

Tathāgatācintya-guhya-nirdeśa-sūtra [de bzhin gshegs pa’i gsang ba bsam gyis mi khyab pa’i mdo]: Ārya-tathāgatācintya-guhya-nirdeśa-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra [’phags pa de bzhin gshegs pa’i gsang ba bsam gyis mi khyab pa bstan pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po’i mdo], section 3 of the Ratna-kūṭa, **Peking No. 760**, **Vol. 22**, pages 47.4.4-95.2.8, folio 113b4-233a1, dKon brtsegs I, Tshi.

Tri-skandha-sūtra [phung po gsum pa]: Ārya-triskandhaka-nāma-mahāyāna-sūtra [’phags pa phung po gsum pa zhes bya ba theg pa chen po’i mdo], **Peking No. 950, Vol. 37**, pages 108.4.2-117.2.8, folio 61a2-82b8, mDo sna tshogs XXIV, ’U.

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